

# Lectors & Ministers of the Word



*2011 General Instruction of the Roman Missal  
(GIRM)*

*Canadian Edition*

Lectors and Ministers of the  
Word/Archdiocese of Regina  
Liturgy Commission

# Ministers of the Word

- **The following are ministers of the Word:**
  - The two lectors, who proclaim the First and Second Readings;
  - The psalmist or cantor who proclaims the Responsorial Psalm;
  - The deacon (or priest) who proclaims the Gospel;
  - The presiding priest who gives the Homily;
  - The minister or ministers who announce the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful.

# Content

- This presentation will deal mainly with the role of the lectors.
- The role of the cantor, deacon and priest are included in other presentations.

# Preparation

- All ministers at the Eucharist should arrive early to make the necessary preparations for their role in the Liturgy.
- The lectors should review the readings for the Mass and adjust the microphone to the proper height before the celebration begins.
- The Lectionary is placed on the ambo before Mass. (128)

# Overview

- If there are several readings, it is better to distribute them among a number of lectors.
- But it is not at all appropriate that ... the same reading be proclaimed by two readers, one reading after the other, unless it is the Passion of the Lord. (109)

# Overview

- If the entrance hymn or communion song is not sung and the antiphons in the Missal are not said by the faithful, the reader may recite them at the appropriate time. (198)

# Overview

- Wearing the appropriate vesture, the reader joins in the procession to the altar with the other ministers.
- The alb is the vestment common to all ministers, ordained and lay (see no.336).
- Acolytes, lectors and other lay ministers may wear the alb or other vestment that is approved by the Conference of Bishops (see no. 339).

# Overview

- If there is no deacon, the lector may carry the Book of the Gospels. In this case he/she walks in front of the priest; otherwise with the other ministers. (194)
- In the Eucharistic celebration, a lector has his own proper office and must exercise it, even though ordained ministers may be present. (99, See also *Introduction to the Lectionary [IL]*, 51)



# Entrance Procession

## **The order of procession is:**

- A server with smoking censer, if incense is used;
- Ministers (servers) carrying lighted candles, and between them an acolyte or server with the cross;
- The acolytes and other ministers;
- A lector who, if no deacon is present, may carry the Book of the Gospels, slightly elevated; or
- The deacon, who may carry the Book of the Gospels;
- The priest who is to celebrate the Mass. (120)

# Approaching the Altar

- Upon reaching the altar, the lectors make a profound bow to the altar with the other ministers.
- The reader carrying the Book of the Gospels approaches the altar, omits the reverence and places the Book of the Gospels upon it.
- Then, the lectors take their places in the sanctuary [or body of the church] with the other ministers. (195, 49, 122)

# Reverences

- There are two kinds of bows: (1) a bow of the head or slight bow, and (2) a bow of the body or profound bow (see no. 275).
- If there is a tabernacle in the sanctuary, the priest, deacon and other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar or leave the sanctuary, but not during the celebration of Mass itself.
- Ministers who carry the Book of the Gospels, the processional cross or candles bow their heads in place of a genuflection (see no. 274).

# Liturgy of the Word

- After the Collect Prayer, all sit. The priest may, very briefly, introduce the faithful to the liturgy of the word.
- Then the reader goes to the ambo and ... proclaims the first reading... (128)
- The readings are always proclaimed from the ambo. (58)

# Suggested Procedure

- *When the Opening Prayer is finished, the reader remains standing as the congregation sits. There should never be any movement while the priest or assembly is praying. Then the reader proceeds to the ambo . A bow to the celebrant is not made, rather it is made to the altar if the reader passes directly in front of it.*

# Suggested Procedure

- *Once the proper reading is located, the reader should take several deep, but silent breaths. This will give the congregation sufficient time to get "settled" and listen to the Word of God. When all is quiet, the reader may pick up the Lectionary or rest the hands comfortably on the ambo, and begin the reading.*
- *The reader begins with the introduction, "A Reading from the Book of **N**." Nothing else is added. All references to chapter and verse, or summaries are omitted. There is no need to announce that this is the first reading.*

# Suggested Procedure

- *At the end of the reading, the reader pauses momentarily, and then says the acclamation, "The Word of the Lord."*
- *The reader does not hold up the Lectionary, for the people are acclaiming the proclaimed **Word of God**—not the book.*

# Suggested Procedure

- *A moment of silence is now observed before the responsorial psalm is begun. After the acclamation, "The Word of the Lord" the reader remains at the ambo for a time of reflective silence.*
- *The reader leaves as the psalmist approaches to sing the responsorial psalm or as the music begins.*
- *As the psalmist leaves the ambo, another reader approaches to proclaim the second reading, following the same pattern used for the first reading. As the music for the gospel acclamation begins, the reader leaves the ambo.*



# Suggested Procedure

- *If the Book of the Gospels is to be used, then after the second reading, the reader removes the Lectionary from the ambo and places it on a shelf of the ambo, the credence table or another place of respect.*

# Liturgy of the Word

- Moments of silence are observed after the first and second reading and after the homily, so that all may briefly meditate on what they have heard. (56, 128, 45)

# Responsorial Psalm

- The responsorial psalm is sung/proclaimed from the ambo or another suitable place. (61, 309)
- If there is no psalmist, the reader may also proclaim the responsorial psalm after the first reading. (196)

# Profession of Faith

- All join in the recitation of the Creed.

# Prayer of the Faithful

- The priest, standing at the chair, leads the general intercessions.
- The people give expression to their prayer either by an invocation after each intention or by praying in silence.
- After the priest introduces the universal prayer, the deacon or another minister or the reader announces the intentions from the ambo. (197)
- *When announcing the intentions, the minister comes to the ambo before the priest's introduction and remains until the priest finishes the closing prayer.*

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# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- The ministers of the Word, as members of the assembly, join in the celebration of the Eucharist.

# Communion

- *In order not to delay the communion of the faithful, it is recommended that only the extraordinary ministers of communion receive communion at the altar.*
- *If possible, the readers, servers and other ministers should join in the communion procession of the faithful.*

# Concluding Rite

- At the end of Mass the priest and deacon venerate the altar with a kiss.
- Then with the lay ministers they make a profound bow, and all leave in the manner followed for the entrance procession.  
(169, 186)





**Amen**

*The End*