

St Christopher's Church, Holsworthy NSW

Ministers of the Word Guidelines



ELIGIBILITY:

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Regularly worships at St Christopher's and receives Holy Communion.

TRAINING – is offered locally at All Saints Parish, Liverpool. However Ministers of the Word do require some natural abilities such as confidence, poise and sensitivity to the listeners and reading skills – the ability to develop proclamation techniques and a clear and steady voice are attributes of a good Reader. These qualities help render a person capable of effective liturgical proclamation – for our purpose is to engage the assembly and celebrate a shared faith.

Preparation before Sunday

- Read over the passages at least 2-3 times before Sunday – getting a sense of the pace and flow;
- Read passages before and after set reading
- Identify the type of passage you are to read – a story, a prophecy, a parable, an instruction, song or poetry
- Consider the meaning: What does the text mean? Where is the climax? What is the tone and spirit: comforting, warning, informing or intimate?

Upon arrival at the church

- Arrive at least 10-15 minutes before Mass starts. Make sure that the Lectionary is correctly marked and that the microphone is adjusted properly
- Familiarise yourself with the Prayer of the Faithful.
- If you are going to process in with the Lectionary, please make your way down to the back of the church.

At the steps of the Sanctuary

- All reverence the altar with a bow.
- The priest proceeds to the Sanctuary followed by altar servers to their positions.
- Take the Lectionary to the lectern (Ambo), and place it reverently (with both hands) onto the lectern - opened to the Reading in readiness and return to your seat.
- As you step off the Sanctuary, reverence the altar again.

Liturgy of the Word

- Approach the Sanctuary with the Commentator together and you both reverence the altar with a bow. Reader proceeds to the lectern and Commentator proceeds to the commentary position.
- Proceed at a respective pace, there is no need to rush.

At the Ambo/Lectern

- As Commentator is introducing the Readings, pause and gather composure
- Begin with “**A reading from**” to announce where the Reading is from, then **PAUSE**
- Proceed with your Reading – at the end **PAUSE**
- Conclude with “**The Word of the Lord**” – then **PAUSE** again
- Introduce the Responsorial Psalm with “**The response to the psalm is....**”
- There is **NO NEED** to say ‘Response’ after each prayer – all you need to do is look up from the Lectionary and the congregation will know to recite the Psalm.

- Before beginning the 2nd Reading – pause and gather composure
- Begin with “**A reading from**” to announce where the Reading is from, then **PAUSE**
- Proceed with your Reading – at the end **PAUSE**
- Conclude with “**The Word of the Lord**” – then **PAUSE** again

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- Announce “**Please stand to welcome the Gospel**”, then wait for the congregation to all stand before leading the Gospel Acclamation.
- Then leave the Sanctuary, (you will be joined by the Commentator) together reverence the altar before returning to your seats.
NOTE: If the Gospel Acclamation is sung, leave while the second Alleluia is being sung.
- Do not close the Lectionary or the Book of Gospels.

Prayer of the Faithful

- Pay attention to the Creed. You should arrive at the ambo/lectern in an unhurried manner so that you have time to bring forward sheet with the prayers from under the Lectionary.
- Approach the sanctuary, reverence the altar with a bow before returning to the lectern.
- **PAUSE** after the opening prayer (priest) before you announce the first prayer.
- Announce each prayer, **PAUSE** before saying “**Lord hear us**” or “**We pray to the Lord**”
- After the closing prayer (priest) return to your seat. Remember to reverence the altar with a bow after stepping off the sanctuary.

Extra Comments:

- If you are not able to attend on your rostered day and time, please make arrangements for someone to take your place. Do not rely on someone being present to cover for you.
- Be mindful of the dress regulations:
 - Men: long trousers/collared shirts
 - Ladies: dress/skirt/long or ¾ length pants
 - NO singlet tops/tracksuits/shorts/T-shirts/Rugby tops/mini-skirts
 - NO thongs

Practical Hints:

- **Stance/balance** – make sure you are standing evenly on both feet.
- **Voice Projection** – remember to use your voice – the microphone cannot amplify a quiet voice
- **Pronunciation:** check carefully for any unusual words, clarify if not sure
- **Enunciation:** each and every word is important.-.give value to the written word.
A slower pace and clarity of each word will enable the congregation to stop reading their sheets and listen to the word as it is proclaimed by you.
- **Emphasis:** careful preparation will reveal the words or phrases that need light and shade, more emphasis etc.
- **Fading sentences:** breath control and pausing at appropriate times will prevent the loss of energy towards the end of sentences.

PAUSE PAUSE PAUSE –

Please allow those gathered to hear and reflect on the proclamation of the word.