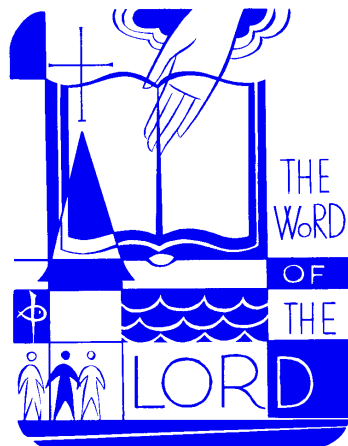


Participant's Notes

The Lector Program

Diocese of Green Bay, WI
Draft 2006

*Jesus was a lector.
"He went into the synagogue,
according to his custom on the Sabbath day,
and he rose up to read." Luke 4:17*



The Lector Program is designed and presented for the formation and development of lectors who proclaim the Word of God in the parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Green Bay. The basic text and source for the presentations is *A Well-Trained Tongue* by Aelred R. Rosser.

The Lector Program is developed and published by
the Department of Worship and the Liturgical Commission

For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. Matt. 20:28

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The Lector Program
For the Training and Development of Lectors
in the Diocese of Green Bay, WI

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Dedication

**We dedicate the Lector Program to Bishop Robert J. Banks
who inspired and directed us
to begin the study and preparation of a practicum for lectors.**

**Bishop Banks' concern for
effective proclamation of the Word
throughout the Diocese of Green Bay
has encouraged parish leaders to use the Lector Program.**

**We thank Bishop Banks
and ask him for his continued prayer and support.**

The Liturgical Commission 2005

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the Green Bay Diocesan resource guide to assist in the continued formation and development of well trained lectors. The desired outcome of the Lector Program is the effective proclamation of God's Word in all of the parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Green Bay.

History

In September of 2002 Bishop Robert J. Banks inspired and directed the Lector Program for the continued formation of lectors in the Diocese of Green Bay. The Lector Committee, appointed by the Liturgical Commission, researched, developed and piloted the Program in 2003-2004. In the summer of 2004 the Committee gathered the suggestions for improvement and prepared the final draft for presentation of the Lector Program at The Gathering, October 2004. The Program is available for regional and parish presentation.

Description of the Lector Program

The Lector Program is a two-hour, 15 minute session for both experienced and new lectors of the parish. It includes three short presentations on effective proclamation and a practicum involving the participants. Follow-up individualized review with practice and/or video are encouraged and helpful to continue development of the skills of proclamation.

Focus of the Program in the Mass: Liturgy of the Word

To promote meditation, brief moments of silence should be included between the readings (*GIRM, General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 2002, nos. 45 & 56*); therefore, the Liturgy of the Word should not be rushed. Following the Opening Prayer, the first reader goes to the ambo (pulpit) to proclaim the first reading.

The reader waits for the assembly to settle. Making eye contact, the reader announces the reading, pauses a moment, and then begins the passage. The *LECTIONARY* calls for a very simple introduction: "A reading from the book [letter] of " There is no need to embellish this with chapter or verse. At the conclusion of the reading, the reader pauses a moment, makes eye contact, and announces: "The Word of the Lord."

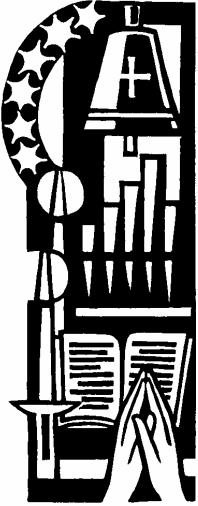
At the conclusion of the first reading, the reader should remain still and silent for a moment and then return to their seat.

The cantor then sings the responsorial psalm, preferably at the ambo. (*LFM, Lectionary for Mass, no.20; GIRM 2002, nos. 61 & 309*)

At the conclusion of the psalm, the second reader then moves to the ambo for the proclamation of the second reading. The reader follows the same procedure as for the first reading, without embellishment. When they have concluded this reading, the reader removes the *Lectionary* from the ambo and returns to their seat.

In the absence of a deacon, a reader or a cantor may lead the intentions of the general intercessions at the ambo following the presider's introduction to these prayers (*LFM, nos. 30-31; GIRM 2002, no. 71*). When the priest finishes the prayer after the intercessions, the reader returns to their seat.

Stand up! Proclaim the Word for God is present here!



Lectors prepare well in order to:

- Be a worthy instrument for God's Word.
- Celebrate the tradition of faith.
- Participate with confidence, dignity, and restraint.
- Honor the Scriptures and proclaim them effectively.
- Enhance the ritual of the Mass.
- Promote meditation and recollection.

Allow the Scriptures more and more to influence our daily life. This is the best part of being a lector: the Scriptures begin to form us.

INSPIRATION

Jesus was a lector. "He went into the synagogue, according to his custom on the Sabbath day, and he rose up to read." *Luke 4:17*

The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that a richer share in God's Word may be provided for the faithful.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL), 51

The lector is the storyteller of the community. The story gives meaning to our lives. One who truly proclaims the Scriptures in the midst of the assembly is at home in the Scriptures, loves them, prays with them.

Liturgy with Style and Grace, Gabe Huck

Were not our hearts burning within us on the road while he opened the Scriptures to us?

Luke 24: 32

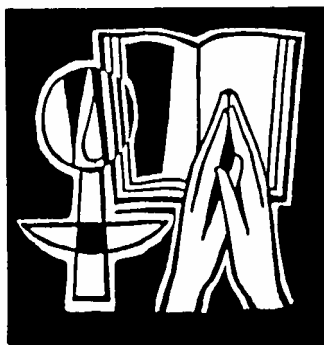
PREPARATION

The *spiritual preparation* presupposes a prayerful life and a biblical and liturgical formation. The purpose of the biblical formation is to give lectors the ability to understand the readings in context and to perceive by the light of faith the central point of the revealed message.

The *liturgical formation* ought to equip the lectors to have some grasp of the meaning and structure of the Liturgy of the Word and the significance of its connection with the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the liturgical cycle/season/feast.

The *technical preparation* should make the lectors more skilled in the art of proclamation.

Our Starting Point: Prayer



Those who proclaim God's word in the liturgy are Ministers of the Word. By God's call to them, proclaimers enter a deeper relationship with God revealed in sacred Scripture. They become prophets who speak for God through the proclamation of the Word of God.

Pray to enter God's blessing of faith, conviction and sensitivity to proclaim the Word:

Set aside time and place to pray.

Move close to God in praise and thanksgiving.

Pray for openness, humility and understanding of God's message.

Reflect on the Scripture passage with a ready mind and heart.

Let the invitation of the Word touch and guide daily life.

Pray for the assembly where the Word of God will be "fulfilled in their hearing".

Prayer of a Minister of the Word

(In Preparation)

Lord, invest me with your power
as I prepare to proclaim the marvel of your message.
I have prepared my reading,
I have tried to take within me
the meaning of what I am about to proclaim.
Help me to proclaim, not just with my lips,
but with my whole heart and soul.

Lord, make me a hollow reed
so that your voice will be heard by all who hear me.

Free me of excessive concern over my performance.
Convert my feeling of nervousness and
turn all my apprehension into an energy
for proclaiming your word with power and authority.

May your Spirit live in me and
fill the holy words that I proclaim.

Amen

Steps to Effective Preparation for Ministry of the Word

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1. **Keep company with the Scriptures** on a regular basis through a small group or private study with resources.
2. **Pray.** Visualize the particular assembly of whom you are a part. Ask God to touch their hearts. Be a witness to God's Word.
3. **A week ahead, survey all of the readings for the Mass.** Connect ideas or focus with the Gospel and Old Testament reading.
4. **Read your text silently** several times, getting a sense of the pace and flow.
5. **Identify the type of passage** you are to read, e.g., a story, a prophecy, a parable, a witty saying, an instruction, a song or poetry.
6. **Consider: What is the meaning of the passage?** Where is the climax? What is the tone and spirit: comforting, warning, informing, intimate?
7. **Check pronunciations and words of emphasis.** Decide important phrases or words to emphasize. (Verbs are a good choice.) See the Workbook for Lectors (LTP) for suggestions.
8. **Use effective communication skills** of rate, pausing, articulation, tone quality. Practice where to make eye contact.
9. **Practice reading aloud.** Several times! (experienced—6 times, new—12 times) Read to another person or tape recorder for feedback.
10. **Pray again** for personal growth through the specific Scriptures you will be proclaiming and for your ministry as reader of the Word of God. What is its meaning in your own life? Thank God for this privilege. Praise God's faithful love communicated to us through these Scriptures.
11. **Enter into the spirit and message** of the season of the church year and/or the feast.
12. **Before Mass, check the lectionary and the sound system.** Then during the Liturgy of the Word, approach the ambo reverently. Look at the assembly in a friendly manner before beginning and as you announce the reading.



THE BASICS OF GOOD PUBLIC SPEAKING

1. **Catholics frequently point out three problems about lectors :**

Inability to hear the lector.

A fast pace that makes it impossible to understand the reading.

Inadequate expression or emphasis causing lack of interest.

2. **The factors that work together to promote effective proclamation include:**

Breathing

Breathe deeply from the stomach.

Rate

Speak at a pace that expresses the sense of the reading. Change pace as needed; not too fast or too slow.

Pauses

Pause to amplify the meaning of the words.

Volume

Project your voice to be heard and understood.

Tone

Use a tone of voice appropriate for the nature of the reading and the spirit of its message.

Pitch

Where is your voice on the musical scale? Use a lower pitch that is more easily understood.

3. **Using inflection and emphasis involves** changes in pitch or loudness that will add variety, interest and meaning to what is proclaimed. Talk to the assembly.

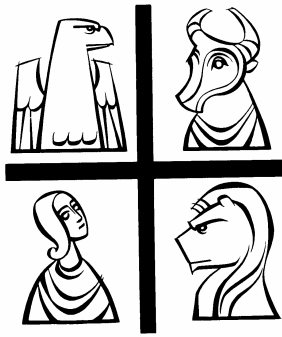
4. **Speaking clearly and pronouncing words correctly** requires that the lector check the pronunciations of difficult words and practice them.

5. **Making eye contact** challenges lectors to encompass the assembly engaging them in the message of the Scriptures.

**STAGE FRIGHT IS THE ENERGETIC DESIRE TO DO WELL.
SERIOUS PREPARATION HELPS TO CONTROL IT.**



THE BASICS OF EFFECTIVE LITURGICAL PROCLAMATION



As lectors we are members of a “liturgical team” that comes together to create a celebration of faith and worship that will build up the assembly in faith.

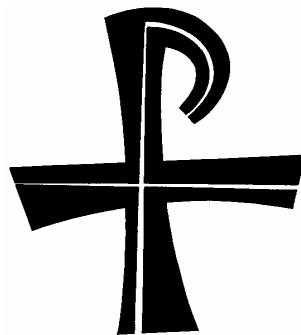
One of the most important things we do as lectors is to keep alive the stories, Scriptures and the rituals of our faith. As lectors, we are involved in the Liturgy of the Word, an important part of the Mass. Christ is present at two “tables” of the liturgy:

***the table of the God’s Word at the ambo and
the table of the Eucharist at the altar.***

Understanding the elements of liturgical proclamation is therefore essential to the effective proclamation of the Word of the Lord.

I. RITUAL LANGUAGE

- A ritual is a patterned action or speech (or both) repeated in the same way at the same time for a specific reason. A ritual is repetitious and predictable. It welcomes and prepares us for the action and grace of God.
- When a lector begins with “A reading from. . .”, the assembly already knows they are about to hear words from the Bible. Therefore proclaiming Scripture as a lector at Mass is not “informative” it is “formative”. The action of God forms and touches the hearer challenging and intervening in their way of life and faith. May the Word be fulfilled in their hearing.
- Ritual language expresses the familiar *anew* each time the ritual is celebrated. It is not concerned with proclaiming something *new*. The assembly hears the word in light of their experience and growth at the present moment in their lifetime.



II. LITURGICAL DIALOGUE

- Do not add or change ritual language. Liturgical dialogue involves the same acclamation and response each time. To conclude the proclamation with “The Word of the Lord” is an example of celebrating our faith. Part of the appeal of liturgy and Scripture is that they are proclaimed in an expected form.
- Silence is also important to the liturgical dialogue. Moments of silence are offered after the first and second readings and at the completion of the homily. Going too fast can impede recollection and reflection.
- The Lectionary is arranged according to
 - i. cycles (A-Matthew, B-Mark and C-Luke),
 - ii. feasts (saints and solemnities) and
 - iii. seasons (Advent, Christmastime, Lent, Triduum, Eastertime and Ordinary Time). The liturgical year directs the content and spirit of the readings.

III. SCRIPTURAL LANGUAGE

- A lector needs to have familiarity with Scripture. If lectors read and pray with Scripture outside of Mass, it will give authority to the message proclaimed.
- Writers of Scripture had purpose to their script. They sought to communicate more than just the literal words. Lectors need to understand the purpose of the writer and convey that point to the assembly.
- Understand that God’s word is meant for people living now, not just 2,000 years ago. The words are as fresh and true now as they were then, especially if the lector proclaims them that way.



The Lectionary for Mass

A Guide for preparation of the Readings for Masses The Revised Lectionary

Sunday Editions, Volume 1

Options:

One Book with Cycles A, B, C

Readings for three years in sequence placed at each Sunday

Note: Year C is a year-number always divisible by 3. (2001 = C)

or

Three Books, one each for Cycle A, B, C

**The Book of the Gospels, Cycles A, B, C
in sequence at each Sunday Gospel**

Weekday Editions, Volumes 2, 3, 4

Three Weekday volumes:

Volume 2 Year 1 (odd-numbered years)

Volume 3 Year 2 (even-numbered years)

**Volume 4 Readings for Commons, Ritual Masses, Masses for
Various Needs and Occasions, Votive Masses and
Masses for the Dead**

Recommendation for Deacons, Lectors and/or Sacristans:

Check the Sacristy to research the Volumes of the Lectionary.

There may be up to 7 possible Books. Study the contents of each Book.

Be prepared to set out the proper Volume for each particular Mass.

**Because of the newness and the complexity of the Lectionary Books,
check the appropriate Book and mark the readings before the parish Masses.**

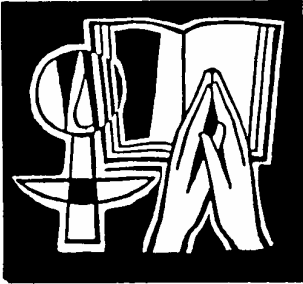
The Lectionary is not carried in the entrance procession. It is placed on the ambo.

After the second reading it is placed on a shelf of the ambo or on an appropriate table.

The Book of the Gospels has the honor of procession and placement on the altar until the Gospel. After the proclamation, if necessary, the Book of the Gospels is placed on an appropriate table or shelf. The Book of the Gospels and the Lectionary are not carried out in the recessional.

Selected Revisions for The Liturgy of the Word

(Numbers refer to the revised GIRM, USA edition 2003)

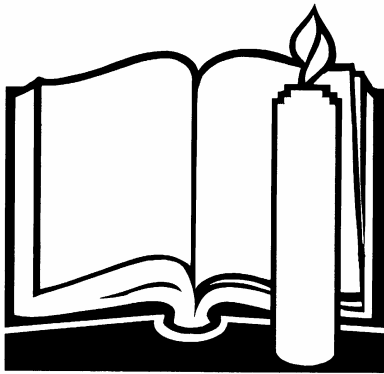


Why do we celebrate the Liturgy of the Word? To hear God's Word in faith by:

**Responding with open ears, minds and hearts to the stories of faith.
Giving thanks and praise for God's mighty acts in history.
Converting our lives in response to the movement of the Spirit.
Going forth to the world to live and to preach the Word of God.**

Liturgy of the Word

- Before Mass the Lectionary is placed on the ambo since it is not carried in procession. (118b,120d) If the Book of the Gospels is used, after the second reading, the Lectionary is removed and placed on an appropriate shelf or table.
- The Book of the Gospels is carried in procession, slightly elevated and placed on the altar. (120d, 122) It **is not carried out** at the end of the Mass. (BCL, Bishops Committee on the Liturgy Newsletter, XXXVI, No, 22)
- If the tabernacle is in the sanctuary, the priest and ministers not carrying sacred items, genuflect to it when arriving at the sanctuary and at the end of the Mass, but not during Mass. They make a profound bow to the altar. (274) Therefore when reaching the altar, **deacons/lectors carrying the Book of the Gospels omit the sign of reverence** to the altar. (and tabernacle if applicable)
- The Word is always proclaimed from the ambo. (58) It is preferable that different readers proclaim the first and second readings but each reading is to be proclaimed by a single reader except the Passion. (109)
- Any sort of haste that hinders recollection must be avoided. (56)
Periods of silence are appropriate before the readings, after the first and second reading and after the homily. (56)
- It is preferable that the Psalm be **sung** from the ambo. (61) Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the Psalm. (61)
- At the Gospel the procession with the book can include the censer and ministers with candles. (133)
- When there is a deacon, he normally announces the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful (177), or a cantor, lector or one of the lay faithful may do so. (71) The assembly responds with an invocation or with silence. (71)



Summary of the Guidelines and Procedures For Ministers of the Word

Spirituality

Effective lectors are reverent, confident and deliberate. They continue to pray, develop and nourish their own spirituality. When proclaiming the Scriptures, their love and faith are evident to the hearers of the Word. Their lives change because they are constantly converted and motivated by the Word of God.

Processions

The deacon or lector carries the Book of the Gospels and follows the servers and cross bearer in procession. The book is carried with the binding to the right, with both hands and a few inches away from the breast, not held aloft like a banner. Lectors do not bow when holding the book. The Gospel Book is placed on the altar during the procession. The Lectionary is placed on the ambo before Mass. Lectors read from the Lectionary – not from a missalette or a sheet of paper. After the second reading the lector places the Lectionary on a shelf or a stand. Do **not** carry out the Lectionary or the Book of the Gospels in the recessional. The Books are always handled with reverence and honor.

Communication

Lectors communicate with the assembly in nonverbal ways – body language, dress, posture, attitude, etc. Dress simply and move with a demeanor of honor and reverence.

Preparation of the Lectionary

Review the Lectionary before Mass, noting the markers, the page, and the reading. This is important if you use another book in your preparation. Place the Lectionary on the ambo. Check the microphone and your place of seating. Ask the celebrant about the procedure for the entrance and the recessional.

Presence

Liturgy is one integral action –it functions like a symphony. Those who are in leadership roles in liturgical worship should be present from the beginning of Mass to the end. Come early to prepare and to pray. Inner quiet and composure will convey prayerfulness and the Spirit of God.

Participation

Liturgy is a celebration, a ritual prayer of the assembly with leadership of the celebrant and the liturgical ministers. The focus is on expressing and celebrating the immediate faith experience of all present. Those in liturgical leadership enhance this experience with full, active and conscious participation. **Dignified** and **restrained** participation shows an alert awareness of the significance of ritual worship.

Attire

Lectors carefully choose attire for simplicity, appropriateness and professionalism. On festive occasions all liturgical ministers may wear an alb or consider appropriate clothing with the color and spirit of the season or feast.

Spirituality, Having an Eye for God

The Spirituality of the Lectors Makes a Difference

The presence of God is eased by the holiness of those who serve at the prayer of the church. As lectors let us have an eye and heart for God. Let us live a life rooted in God, driven by the passion and fire of the Spirit and moved by love for the community, the Body of Christ. Let us have an eye to interpret life in the light of God and the Scriptures, to see the spirit shaping the events of life. We are assured by God's history of faithfulness.

As lectors, called by God, we strive to:

Appreciate silence and do more listening. Slow down and live simply.

Pray often: spontaneous as well as formal. Pray for the community we serve.

Read and pray with the Scriptures. Let them guide our lives.



Handle each religious symbol, vessel, book or object with respect and care.

Be attentive, joyful, hospitable and gracious when proclaiming God's Word.

Know ourselves with our gifts and weaknesses. Be at ease with ourselves so that we may become worthy instruments of God.



Reflect on the meaning of our faith, our community and our personal call to serve the Lord.

Act with reverence: stand, walk, kneel, speak, sing and serve reverently.

Realize that our service is more than a job or a profession. It is a ministry flowing from the power of our Baptism. It is a gift, a right and a responsibility.



Open our hearts and minds to the message and movement of the Spirit. Be ready for change that is directed by the Spirit.

Study and grow in knowledge and understanding of our liturgical ministry.

Cultivate a heart of gratitude and praise. See all of life as gift.



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General Diocesan Guidelines for Lay Liturgical Ministers

Diocese of Green Bay

Revised 2006

Qualifications: Lay Liturgical Ministers should be Catholics in good standing with the Church, practicing the faith and fully initiated through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist (with the exception of young family members, not fully initiated, but serving in the ministry of Altar Serving, Hospitality and Music).

Age: The age of 18 is established as the minimum age for Lay Liturgical Ministers with the exception of family ministry for Altar Serving, Hospitality and Music. Exceptions to the age requirement, outside of family ministry, require permission from the Pastor and the Vicar General/Chancellor. Besides the age factor, the question of maturity is taken into account as well as the necessary training and competencies. Consideration can be given for mature and qualified high school students to serve as lectors.

Selection of Lay Liturgical Ministers:

When the pastor, parish director or pastoral team has determined a need for additional Lay Liturgical Ministers, they begin to surface qualified parishioners. A personal invitation to each is the normative procedure rather than a general call for volunteers. Selection should consider that

- ◆ Candidates selected for Lay Liturgical Ministries need to reflect the diversity of the parish community which includes individuals of various ages, abilities, social and ethnic background; male and female; married, single and widowed.
- ◆ The number of ministers is determined by need. There should not be so few as to require multiple services on any one day nor so many that each does not serve at least monthly.
- ◆ The lives of potential ministers need to reflect service to the community. The ministry is not a reward for those active in the parish or the creation of any type of elite status.
- ◆ The Christian Community, who calls forth the Lay Liturgical Ministers, needs to be instructed so that the ministry may be fully appreciated as service at the Eucharist.

Terms of Service: Parishes have found that it is generally desirable to commission Lay Liturgical Ministers for a three-year period with the exception of musicians and artists. After three years of service, it is helpful for ministers to evaluate their service. Each may decide to take time for renewal, serve in another ministry or be commissioned for another three-year term. It is not recommended that ministers serve more than three terms in succession, that is, nine years. Reasons: It encourages turnover in this ministry and gives many people the opportunity to serve. It also prevents the parish staff and Worship and Spiritual Life Committee from relying too heavily on a limited group and ensures that ministers will not be called upon to serve indefinitely in one form of ministry.

Liturgical Role: Lay Liturgical Ministers normally assume only one liturgical role at a liturgy. In liturgical celebrations each one, priest and layperson, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to that office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL)*, 28. In this way no one needs to serve in more than one area of liturgical ministry for a given year.

Training: All who serve as Lay Liturgical Ministers need to attend special training sessions to become aware of the theological, pastoral and procedural aspects of their service. Appropriate knowledge, a prayerful life and particular skills are essential for those who serve in the ministries. The Diocesan Worship Office provides a *Leader's Guide* and *Participant's Notes* for a training session of the Lay Liturgical Ministers.

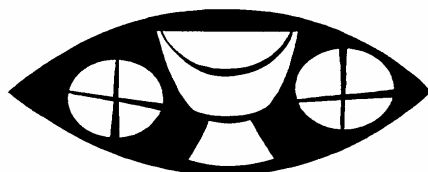
Attire: Attire for Lay Liturgical Ministers is the choice of the parish. It is the responsibility of the Pastor and the Worship and Spiritual Life Committee to study the nature of their celebrations and recommend the appropriate attire for ministers in their parish.

Lay Liturgical Ministers are first and foremost members of the assembly. Their attire needs to speak authentically and respectfully of their identity and of reverence for the ministry in which they are privileged to serve.

The **alb** is the robe of the Baptized Christian. There is an option for all Lay Liturgical Ministers to wear the alb since Baptism is the source of all ministry. Or the alb may be worn weekly or selectively to add festivity to the great feasts and seasons of the church year. Some parishes give a personal white alb to all who serve as ministers.

Ordinary attire of dignity, such as what would be worn for business or similar circumstances, is also appropriate for all Lay Liturgical Ministers.

Commissioning: Commissioning ministers for their role is recommended in accordance with the Rite found in the *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 63, #1871-1896. It is appropriate that those selected as liturgical ministers be formally commissioned during the weekend liturgies. In this way they will be supported by the prayer of the people they will serve. Commissioning some ministers at each liturgy gives the entire parish the opportunity to participate and becomes a means of catechizing all on the importance and meaning of this ministry. New parish members who have been Lay Liturgical Ministers in their former parishes are commissioned in the same way.



Notes ...

Conclusion

With renewed emphasis on the Bible,
it was only a matter of time before we experienced
the need for ministers of the word –
not just functionaries to pronounce the words aloud
but true ministers called from among the people of God
to become bearers of the word,
lovers of the word,
custodians of the word.
Through their study, prayer, skills and faith,
they break open the word for us.
We are nourished from the ambo as well as from the altar.

Let lectors accept the challenges issued them
by the church's need in our day.
Let them become masters of their task,
lovers of their calling.
Let them be John the Baptist, a herald's voice,
filling in the valleys and lowering the hills,
making a straight path for the Lord
in the hearts of all who have ears to hear.

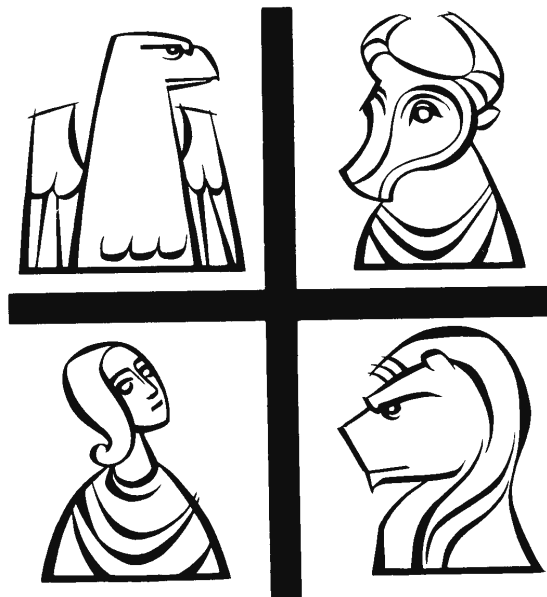
(Ideas from Aelred Rosser)

**Committee that studied, designed, piloted and
presented the Lector Program:**

*Diann Wimmer, Dcn. Rick Miech, Sr. Georgia Acker OP, Anne Arthur SSND
Dcn. Michael Grzeca, Jackie Staley, Tony Staley, Jean Simons, June Ingold
Ellen Mommaerts, Sr. Geri Hoye OP and Anissa Willkom.*

**The Lord God has given me
a well-trained tongue
that I may know how
to speak to the weary.**

Is. 50:4



***The treasures of the Bible
are to be opened up more lavishly,
so that a richer share in God's Word
may be provided for the faithful.***

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The Lector Program
Diocese of Green Bay, WI
Department of Worship
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