

St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church

Guidelines for Ministers of the Word

Remember that this is the Word of God. Your job is not just to read the words written in the Lectionary; you must proclaim them so that the people in the congregation are inspired to go out and live the Word. Don't be afraid to inflect your voice to convey emotion or tone.

Be prepared. The Minister of the Word schedule is placed on the Web Site at least one month in advance. Begin preparing the readings several days before you are scheduled to be a Minister of the Word. Think about what message the readings are trying to convey. What parts seem confusing? If it is hard for you to understand right away when you are reading it, it will be even harder for someone hearing it for the first time to understand. As you read it aloud, remember awkward phrases and sentences. Practice reading them slowly and distinctly, with appropriate inflections. A copy of the Lector Workbook of the Readings can be found in the sacristy. This can be helpful in determining the proper tone and in identifying key words to emphasize. It also helps with the phonetic pronunciation of difficult words that may be found in the readings.

When you practice, go very slowly. You will speed up when you get nervous, so really pace yourself when you practice. Practice so much that you can remember most of it. You're not supposed to memorize it per se, but you should be familiar enough with the text so that you feel comfortable looking out at the congregation periodically. If you have a tape recorder, tape record yourself and listen to the tape. What sounded jumbled? What was too fast? Do you need more inflection? If you do not have a tape recorder, practice in front of someone and have them critique your readings.

This may sound like a lot of work but the amount of effort you put into the readings will be evident to the congregation.

Please try to arrive at Mass at least 10 minutes before Mass begins and meet in the sacristy for prayers prior to the procession. Father will let you know in the sacristy if you are to carry the Book of the Gospels in the process. The Minister of the Word sits in the sanctuary from the procession through the Prayers of the Faithful.

The Minister of the Word is always a part of the procession. If the deacon is not present, the Minister of the Word will carry the Book of the Gospels during the procession and place it on the altar. If the deacon is present, the Minister of the Word will not carry the Book but will still be a part of the procession.

Following Mass, the Minister of the Word is part of the recession. You should join Father and the altar servers to bow before the altar and then become part of the recession from the church.