

Ministry of the Reader

1. When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the Gospel (GIRM, no. 29).
2. By tradition, the function of proclaiming the readings is ministerial, not presidential. The readings, therefore, should be proclaimed by a lector, and the Gospel by a deacon or, in his absence, a priest other than the celebrant (GIRM, no.59).
3. Before Mass starts, the following prayer is said by priests, ministers and altar servers in a proper place:

**God our Father,
 You have called us
 to stand next to Your altar and serve You.
 Pour forth into our hearts the grace of the Holy Spirit.
 that our every word and gesture
 may draw Your People deeper
 into the saving Mysteries of Your Beloved Son.
 Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Presider: Mary, Mother of the Church,

Ministers: pray for us.

P: St. Joseph, M: pray for us.

P: St. (Patron of parish), M: pray for us.

Introductory Rites

Entrance and Procession

4. If incense is being used (GIRM, cf. no.120):
 - a) the thurifer carrying a smoking thurible approaches the presider, who puts incense into the thurible in the vestibule, before the procession commences.

- b) Two altar servers with lighted candles follow two steps behind an acolyte or other minister with the cross. The cross bearer takes the cross directly to its stand and sets it in place facing the altar, not facing the people (unless there is no other crucifix in the sanctuary) (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).
 - c) After the candles, the acolytes and the other Reader (if a Deacon is present). If they are not carrying anything, they genuflect (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass);
 - d) If no Deacon is present, a Reader may carry the Book of the Gospels (though not a Lectionary), slightly elevated;
 - e) Priest(s) concelebrant(s) – (side by side if more than one);
 - f) The Presider (Priest or Bishop) with a second deacon a half-step ahead to the right (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).
 - g) (miter and crozier bearers).
5. The reader who is carrying the Book of the Gospels, omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar placing it on the altar, after that (s)he goes to his/her place.

The Liturgy of the Word

After the First and Second Reading

- 6. Readers are to be seated in first pew in the center aisle one on each side. They approach the pulpit with a bow to the altar in the center aisle, and repeat this gesture upon returning to their seats. (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).
- 7. Upon concluding the Scriptures passage, the reader leaves a brief period of silence before saying, "The Word of the Lord". After the people's response "Thanks be to God" without elevation the lectionary, the reader returns to the pew, making a profound bow to the altar in the central aisle. GIRM, (cf. nos. 128 and 130; Diocesan Norms).
- 8. If there is only one reader and the Psalm will be sung, the Reader steps away from the ambo for a brief period of silence before commencing the second reading.

9. If the Responsorial Psalm is recited, there should be a short pause at the end of the First Reading and the beginning of the Psalm.

Responsorial Psalm & Gospel Acclamation

10. The Responsorial Psalm is to be sung at the Ambo or from the choir (GIRM, cf. no. 61)
11. The ambo should empty when the "Alleluia" begins. The Gospel Acclamation is never to be sung or read from the Ambo (Bishop's letter, Oct. 18, 2016).
12. The Alleluia is sung at every Mass other than Lent. The verses are taken from the Lectionary (GIRM, cf. no.62).
13. If the Gospel Acclamation is not sung may be omitted (GIRM, cf. no.63 c.).
14. During Lent, instead of the Alleluia, either *Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!* or *Glory and praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!* is sung.
15. After the Second Reading, the Reader removes the Lectionary from the ambo and places it in a suitable location. If incense is being used, when Reader is returning to the pew and sits down, candle bearers take candles. Thurifer kneels for the priest to put incense in thurible, then withdraws to stand before candle bearers in the line procession (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).

Prayers of the Faithful

16. The presider introduces the prayers and concludes them with a closing prayer. (GIRM, cf. no.71).
17. The intentions are announced from the ambo, by the deacon if he is present or by a lector, a cantor, or one of the lay faithful if a no Deacon is present (GIRM, cf. no.71).

The Concluding Rites

Exit Procession

18. When people say "Thanks be to God" in response to "Go in peace", the Cross bearer and servers immediately take the processional cross and candles (without waiting for a cue from the priest) and descend to stand facing the altar in the middle of the center aisle, ten to fifteen feet back from the sanctuary (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).
19. Readers emerge from center pews and stand side by side facing the altar before the candle bearers (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).
20. Presider and Deacon reverence the altar, descend to center aisle, and genuflect with the other concelebrants already in the middle aisle. As Presider turns around, Cross bearer leads procession to doors of church (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).