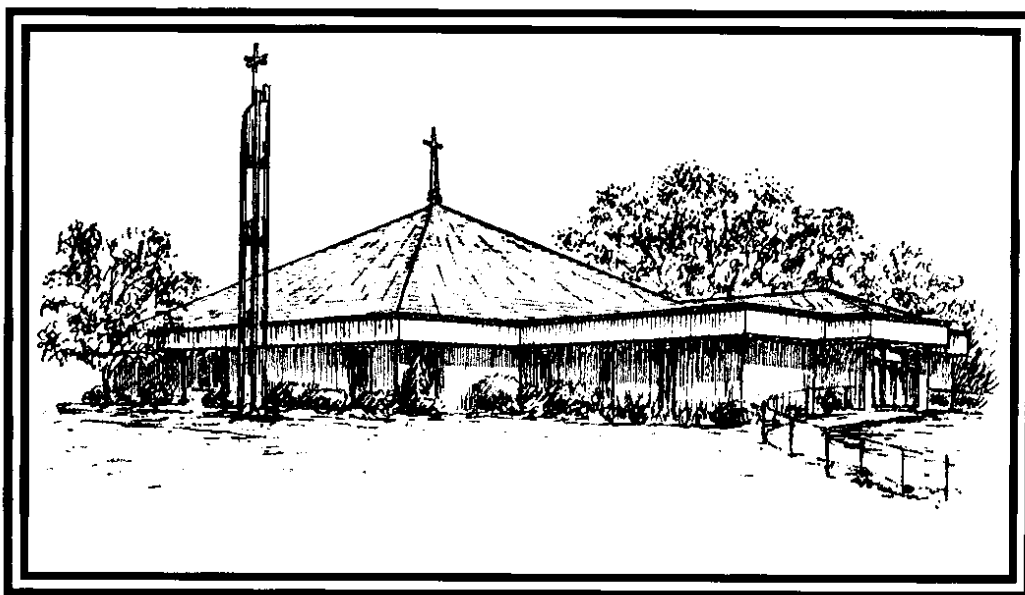


***Christ the King
Catholic Church***

**Lector
Training
Guide**

“When you answer the call to be a minister of the word (one who proclaims the Bible readings to the assembled faith community), you enter a deeper relationship with the word of God as revealed in sacred scripture. You take upon yourself the duty and privilege of bringing the printed word to life – making it flesh, so to speak. Your ministry as reader gives choice to God’s healing and strengthening word as it goes forth irrevocable to the ends of the earth, achieving the purpose for which God sent it.”

*- Aelred Rosser from
“A Well Trained Tongue”*



Thank you for being a Lector at Christ the King Catholic Church. Proclaiming the Word of God at liturgy is a true privilege. This booklet will hopefully help you be more comfortable with the procedures at CTK. There are also some historical overviews of the readings and general intercessions later in this book.

What kind of preparation should I do before the weekend?

Be sure to obtain a copy of the Workbook for Lectors. This book has all the readings for the entire liturgical year. *At least* once during the week, read through the readings a few times. Then, read them aloud to yourself, or with other family members. Bringing the Holy Scriptures into your home is rewarding by itself.

What if I am unable to attend my scheduled Mass?

It is very important that you try to get a substitute for your Mass. Be sure to have an updated phone list all the time. If, after trying all those in your group, you are unable to get a substitute, then call the rectory, 629-1717 and leave a message on extension 6075. We ask that you try contacting all the other lectors for your scheduled Mass first before calling the rectory. Thank you for your cooperation in this regard.

When do I arrive for Mass on my scheduled day?

Be sure to arrive at church at least fifteen minutes early. As you arrive, be sure to sign in on the table in the sacristy, and let the presiding priest know you are there. He will instruct you of any changes in the liturgy that would affect you.

What kind of preparation should I do after signing in?

After you sign in, and check with the priest, go to the ambo and check the lectionary to see it is set for the correct day. Also check for page turns, be comfortable with the phrasing required to make a smooth page turn. Look at the general intercessions. Read through them a couple times. Check for any names you cannot pronounce, and ask the priest if you are unsure.

Where should the Lector sit?

The lector should sit in the first couple pews near the ambo, whether it is in the center or side sections. However, after proclaiming the first reading, the lector will go sit in the first pew next to or behind the altar servers.

The Mass has started, what do I do?

After the priest says the opening prayer, as the congregation is sitting down, start walking to the ambo. Do not rush, but do not go too slowly either. As you approach the ambo, adjust the microphone slowly. After everyone has quieted down, looking out at the congregation, announce, "A reading from..." A short pause, and then continue. Remember to look up once in a while, and speak in a firm, clear, and loud voice. Be careful of your p's into the microphone. After you finish the reading, pause, look up, and then say, "The Word of the Lord." After the response, make any page turns necessary, take one step back, and reflect on the Word of God. You are a model for the congregation. Silence and reflection is integral in the liturgy. Wait until the cantor for the Psalm begins to approach and then go sit down next to, or behind the altar servers. Do not return to your regular seat unless it is in the first pew behind the altar servers.

As soon as the music stops for the Psalm, start walking to the ambo. After you approach the ambo, settle yourself, and then begin as you did in the first reading. After you say "The Word of the Lord," take the lectionary and place it on the shelf. Step back and pause in reflection until the music for the gospel acclamation begins. Then return to your regular seat.

If there is a Deacon standing with the priest, he will read the general intercessions. If there is no Deacon, then you will read them. As we near the end of the Creed, approach the steps next to the ambo. At the invitation of the priest, approach the ambo and read the intercessions, being sure to put a pause before "Let us pray to the Lord." No hand or arm gestures are needed to invite the people to answer, "Lord, hear our prayer." Also remember, you do not say that invocation after asking for the silent prayer. Wait at the ambo until the priest finishes the prayer, and sit down when the congregation sits.

Thank you for your stewardship of time and talent. If at any time you have a question, please do not hesitate to ask.

The following historical overviews were taken from "The Mystery of Faith; A Study of the Structural Elements of the Order of the Mass. By Lawrence J. Johnson.

The First Reading

An integral and primary element of the Jewish synagogue service was the reading of the Law and the Prophets. The books of Moses were read continuously from one session to another; the lesson from the prophets was usually selected at will. This Jewish tradition, as well as the conviction that all the Scriptures, are God's inspired word resulted in the presence of at least one Old Testament reading in the early Christian liturgy of the word. At Rome, it would seem, this reading was followed by two New Testament selections, the second always being the gospel. Before long, and for reasons unknown, the first reading was omitted. As a result of this and other changes, most of the Old Testament selections occurred only one weekday and thus were not heard by the majority of the faithful. To rectify this poverty, Vatican II expressed that with that "the treasures of the Bible... be opened up more lavishly, so that a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's Word" (Constitution on Sacred Liturgy).

On Sundays and major feasts there are always three readings. The first is usually taken from the Old Testament. As a rule, the Old Testament texts were chosen to prepare for the gospel, following such principles as prophecy-fulfillment or thematic continuity or contrast. In keeping with ancient tradition, the first reading during the Easter season is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, which shows how the early church gave witness to the paschal mystery.

The Second Reading

For centuries the Roman liturgy used the term "epistle" to designate the reading, which preceded the gospel even when this reading was not taken from the New Testament letter. In the east, however, the reading before the gospel was simply called "the Apostle," a designation suitable for all the books of the New Testament which come down to us from the church of the apostles.

Today a New Testament text is always given as the second reading on Sundays and major feasts. Although the choice of the text was made quite independently of the other two readings, during certain seasons passages have been selected to correspond with the mystery being celebrated at a particular time of the liturgical year. For example, during the Christmas Season there is a successive reading from John's First Letter, which recounts the mystery of love made incarnate in Christ.

The General Intercessions

One of the components of the synagogue liturgy was a series of eighteen blessings containing requests for individual and universal needs. At a very early period a similar prayer became a fixed part of the liturgy in both east and west. Justin the Martyr, writing in mid-second century Rome, describes the celebration of baptism and then adds that all “offer prayers in common for ourselves, for him who had just been enlightened, and for people everywhere”(I Apologia 65:1). Justin goes on to describe the Eucharist which followed. So significant were these prayers that the catechumens could not be present for them and thus were dismissed beforehand. A remnant of the ancient form of this prayer at Rome is found in the Solemn Prayers of Good Friday. But with the introduction for the east of a litanic form of supplication and due to a number of unfortunate liturgical reforms, these prayers, except on Good Friday, disappeared from the Roman Mass till restored in their litanic form by Vatican II.

Although the general intercessions are a special ministry of the laity, the presentation of the intention is especially confided to the deacon whose particular ministry was, in the early church, focused upon the sick, the poor, widows, etc.