



ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL PARISH  
Bunbury, W.A.

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## COMMENTATORS AND PROCLAIMERS OF THE WORD NEW PARISH LITURGICAL PROCEDURES

The following matters were discussed and agreed upon by those who attended the in-service last Saturday, 16 August 2025. The in-service was facilitated by Helen Brown and Liz Lomax of the Worship Steward Pillar of the Parish Pastoral Council. The Dean of the Cathedral, Rev. Fr Pierre Repuyan VG, was in attendance.

These matters will be implemented starting the weekend of 23-24 August 2025. We seek your cooperation in this regard.

### **I. Introduction**

The Word of God is a living word. Through it, God speaks to humanity in a way that evokes a response by the hearer.

The proclamation of the Word heralds the living word of God. It is one of the ways in which Jesus is present in the celebration of the Eucharist. The word lives in the proclamation but it is not truly effective unless it enters the hearts of those present and influences their every action. Commentators and Readers have a vital role in enabling the listening process. Their great love of Scripture and a feeling of being at home with the biblical stories ensure that the word can be proclaimed with conviction and enthusiasm.

To proclaim the Word of God effectively, it is not enough to just pronounce the words on the page clearly for all to understand. To proclaim is to make the text come alive and elicit a response from those listening. Commentators and Readers need to prepare spiritually for their ministry. They themselves must be the first among many who will be inspired by the Word of God and incarnate it through their lives. When the proclaiming ministry becomes a spirituality, preparation becomes second nature which invites Commentators and Readers to an ongoing process of deepening one's appreciation and passion for the Word of God. The Word of God speaks to us in a special way when it is beautifully proclaimed and effectively interpreted by ministers of the Church.

### **II. The Commentator**

Our parish liturgy now welcomes the inclusion of a Commentator. Commentators will provide the congregation with short explanations and scriptural commentaries to introduce the celebration and break open the hearts and mind of people to Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The commentaries that will be used at our parish liturgies are adapted version originally drawn from the Notre Dame Journal of Pastoral Liturgy.

Alongside providing the welcome and introduction to the Mass, Commentators are also tasked to read the petitions in the Prayer of the Faithful (Universal Prayer or General Intercession).



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The Prayer of the Faithful, as the name implies, is the prayer of the church for the world in general. The intercessions are not prayers of thanksgiving but petitions from the entire community placed before a loving God.

### **III. The Reader**

Readers and listeners are ministers of the Word. As the assembly actively listens to the Word of God proclaimed in the readings, all are drawn more deeply into their relationship with God. The first and second readings are proclaimed by one or two Readers. Proclaiming the Word is a very important ministry. Readers should have a deep love and understanding of Scriptures. They should be carefully prepared, receiving spiritual formation and technical training (GIRM 101). The function of proclaiming the readings is by tradition not presidential but ministerial. Therefore, the readings are to be read by a minister of the Word,

In the Cathedral Parish, Readers lead the Psalm if it is not sung.

### **IV. The key to effective proclamation is spiritual and technical preparation.**

Good preparation grounded in prayer together with the reading and the study of Scripture will assist Readers to understand and give witness to God's Word while growing in the ministry.

Here are some pointers:

#### **A. PREPARATION**

- Read the text several times to get a sense of the pace and flow.
- Sometimes read the whole chapter of which the reading is a part.
- Read all the readings for the day varying the order to begin and end with the Gospel.
- Reflect on how the reading relates to the Gospel.
- Consult a commentary or guide for readers. Break Open the Word, published annually by the Liturgy Brisbane, is a useful resource. There is a copy in the Robing Sacristy.
- Consult a pronunciation guide to ensure correct pronunciation.
- Decide on the style of the reading and approach the reading in a way that matches the style.
- Watch for emotion-filled words.
- Be aware of the climax.
- Before Mass, check the Lectionary and microphone.

#### **B. PROCLAMATION**

- Breathe deeply before beginning the reading.
- Be aware of the way you walk and stand. Your body speaks.
- Plan eye contact. It engages the listeners with the message.
- Set the opening and closing forms apart from the text with a pause and change of tone.
- Vary the pace according to the style.
- Use pause for emphasis.



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- Project your voice. Volume and projection are required for the message to be heard.
- Enunciate clearly. Attack the first word and watch final words and consonants.
- Vary the tone and pitch to suit the message.
- Proclaim with enthusiasm, interpretation and conviction.

## **V. Procedures to be followed by Commentators at each Mass**

1. Arrive 15 minutes before Mass is due to start.
2. Initial the sign-in sheet. As a courtesy, let the Acolyte know that you have arrived.
3. Ensure that the Commentary and Prayer of the Faithful folder are at the lectern. If you are the commentator, adjust the microphone to the correct height.
4. At 5 minutes to the commencement of Mass, proceed to the vesting sacristy to pray with the Priest-Celebrant and those fulfilling a ministry at the Mass.
5. Commentator proceeds to the lectern. Bow before stepping onto the Sanctuary.
6. At the designated start time and once you have heard the bells (These will be intoned by the Acolyte) commence the commentary.
7. Read and follow the prepared script.
8. Step down from the Sanctuary. Turn and bow towards the Altar. Proceed to seat at the lefthand side, close to the Lectern.
9. At the conclusion of the Creed and before the Priest-Celebrant begins the introductory prayer to the Prayer of the Faithful, bow to the Altar and step up to the lectern.
10. Remain at the lectern until the Priest-Celebrant has finished the concluding prayer.
11. Step down from the Sanctuary. Turn and bow towards the Altar. Proceed to seat.

## **VI. Procedures to be followed by the Proclaimer of the Word at each Mass**

1. Arrive 15 minutes before Mass is due to start.
2. Initial the sign-in sheet. As a courtesy, let the Acolyte know that you have arrived.
3. Check that the Lectionary is on the right page.
4. Ensure that the Commentary and Prayer of the Faithful folder is at the lectern.
5. At 5 minutes to the commencement of Mass, proceed go to the vesting sacristy to pray with the Priest-Celebrant and those fulfilling a ministry at the Mass.
6. If a Deacon is not present, carry the Book of Gospels in the procession. Walk after the candle bearers if carrying the Book of the Gospels. (Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will be processing behind the Readers.
7. Walk behind the other Reader if not carrying the Book of the Gospels.
8. Stop at the bottom of the Sanctuary to the lefthand side. Ensure that all are in a straight line and make a head bow with the other ministers if not carrying the Book of the Gospels.
9. Place the Book of the Gospels in the middle of the Altar, closer to the crucifix
10. Leave the Sanctuary to the left. Turn and bow towards the Altar. Proceed to the seats at the left.
11. At the conclusion of the Collect (Spoken by the Priest-Celebrant) stand at the bottom of the steps to the Sanctuary (with the psalmist, If psalm being sung). Make a head bow.
12. Step up to the Lectern. Adjust the microphone to the correct height.



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13. The reader proclaims the reading from the Lectionary already placed on the Ambo (Lectern) there before Mass. It is not liturgically correct to read from the Parish Bulletin.
14. Commence with: "A reading from ...", and do not read the heading of the reading (in italics) or chapter and verses.
15. At the end of each reading the Reader pronounces the acclamation: "The Word of the Lord."
16. If the psalm is spoken, the reader proclaims the response to the psalm, looks up and waits for the congregation to repeat the words. There is never any need to say: "The Response to the psalm is....." or "response" between the verses.
17. During Vigil or Sunday Masses, after the second reading, say: "Please stand to welcome the Gospel."
18. Then, leave the Sanctuary. Bow at the bottom of the steps and proceed to wherever you are seated in the Cathedral.
19. The Commentator and Reader will join the recessional procession. The book of the Gospel is not processed out but remains on the ambo.

## **VII. Dress Code**

Although no specific form of dress is required of Commentators and Readers, the dignity of the liturgy and the seriousness of the ministry should be reflected in the way they present themselves.