

Minutes

**1. Welcome and opening prayer – Fr Gerry**

**2. Reading – what's it like for you? Any issues/difficulties?**

General discussion about some of the issues that readers have found – position of microphone, volume, projection of voice, use of the loop system, male bias, distance of congregation from the reader, congregation involvement, and non-inclusive language. There will be a new lectionary in Advent 2024. Until then, could a guidance sheet be produced to help readers adapt the male biased language in the readings (e.g. brothers = brothers and sisters/ his = their/ he = they etc)? **(MB?)**

**3. Why have readers?**

God is using all of us to read His Word. He is speaking through us. Involvement in the liturgy – not clergy dependant. The gift of variety – we bring our own 'colouring', accents, our faith to speak the Word of God through us.

**4. Preparing to proclaim the readings at mass - Main points discussed alongside the 'Being a Reader at Mass' leaflet.**

Read through the readings beforehand to familiarise yourself with the readings and where to use more emphasis. Useful websites:

<https://universalis.com/index.htm>     <https://www.catholicireland.net/readings/>

Arrive at least 10 minutes before the start of mass to:

- Meet your fellow reader and agree roles
- Ensure the lectionary is open at the correct page and the bidding prayers are in place.
- Read through the bidding prayers
- Gospel acclamation – check with the organist/choir if the Alleluias are going to be sung (the text still needs to be read)
- Check that the microphone is at the right level if you are the first reader.

**5. Proclaiming the Word of God - Main points discussed alongside the 'Being a Reader at Mass' leaflet.**

Both readers to approach the Sanctuary together and bow.

Read slowly.

Pause after announcing the reading and at the end of the reading; make eye contact with the congregation at these points also.

2<sup>nd</sup> reader to adjust the microphone to their own level.

Work on projection of voice.

Don't add extra words at the beginning or end... (see leaflet)

**6. Bidding prayers – Main points discussed alongside the 'Being a Reader at Mass' leaflet.**

Be in place by the end of the Creed.

Read slowly and leave a 10 second pause between each prayer.

Allow a period of silence at the end of the prayers for people's own

Remain at the lectern until Fr Gerry has finished his prayer and the congregation has replied 'Amen'

**7. Prayer of Spiritual Communion**

It was agreed to continue saying this for people watching on the livestream.

Should we continue to use the current version or use the version they use in Chapel? **(MS)**

Approach the Sanctuary during the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the Lamb of God

The prayer should be introduced either by Fr Gerry announcing it or by the reader saying 'A prayer of Spiritual Communion for those watching us at home' (or similar...)

Read the prayer after the Lamb of God. Look towards the camera (not the congregation).

Fr Gerry will then say 'Behold the Lamb of God...'

**8. Questions? How can we help you?**

It was suggested that we hold a workshop to provide some further support and feedback. **(FrG/MS)**

There is additional work being planned to improve the microphones and sound system in church. A second microphone will be installed on the lectern. **(FrG/PH/KS)**

**9. Closing prayer – An excerpt from 'Spiritual reflections on the Ministry of Reader' – Rob (see next page)**

## **Spiritual reflections on the Ministry of Reader**

Yours is a share in the work of the Lord's Spirit who opens our hearts to God's holy word.  
Yours is the task of telling our family story, the story of salvation.  
Yours is to proclaim the true and saving word of God.  
You are the messenger of God's love for us.

Your task is to proclaim that word, which challenges, confronts, and captures our hearts.  
You proclaim a word that heals and comforts and consoles.  
Yours is the ministry of the table of God's word, which feeds the hungers and the longing of our hearts for the truth.

Yours is to offer the story of the "great things the Lord has done for us," that we might turn to the table of Eucharist with good cause to give thanks and praise.  
Yours is nothing less than the ministry of the Lord's voice calling out in the midst of God's people.  
Come to your work from your personal prayer, praying that the Spirit will open your heart to what you proclaim.  
Prepare the word which is yours to speak: study the scriptures, understand the passage, let it dwell deep within you.

Come to your work in awesome reverence of the word you proclaim: it is the Lord's word.  
Come to your ministry as one judged and saved by the word you speak.  
Anyone can read the scriptures in public; only the believer can proclaim them.

Approach the ambo, the table of the Lord as you would the Lord himself, with reverence and awe.  
Handle the book of the Lord's word with great care; it is a tabernacle of the Lord's presence.  
Let your eyes fall often on the faces of the assembly; they are the body of the Lord whose word you proclaim.  
Let the Lord's peace settle in your heart, that your voice may be clear and steady,  
Let your voice echo the sound of the word, with conviction, with gentleness, with strength, and with wonder.

Remember that the story you tell is filled with a drama you need not supply, but must always convey.  
Like the prophet, you will sometimes proclaim what no one wants to hear; remember always your own need to hear the hard saying, and never imagine that your ministry places you above what you proclaim.

If you are the best of the parish lectors, be gentle in helping others to improve.  
If you are the least of the parish lectors, seek out that help which others can give.  
If you do not know how well you read, ask: be grateful to constructive criticism and humbled by any praise you receive.  
Every lector wants to read at the Easter Vigil but not all will be assigned: be patient in waiting your turn and nourish by the word that others proclaim.

Let no minister of the word think that there is nothing left to learn; another commentary and another workshop cannot but help the open mind and heart.  
When your brothers and sisters praise and thank you for your work, take delight in the word that you have heard and rejoice in the work the Lord has accomplished through you.

Be faithful in the work you do, for through it the Lord saves his people.

*Ordinary guy*

<https://aquietmoment.wordpress.com/2007/12/11/spiritual-reflections-on-the-ministry-of-readerlector/#:~:text=You%20are%20the%20messenger%20of,our%20hearts%20for%20the%20truth.>