

*Welcome
to the Catholic Parish
of the Wairarapa*



**‘A community living and sharing the Good News of
Jesus Christ.’**



**Ministry of Proclaimer,
and
Prayers of the Faithful.**

July 2024

PRAYER FOR MINISTERS OF THE WORD

Everlasting God, when He read in the synagogue at Nazareth, Your Son proclaimed the good news of salvation for which He would give up His life.

Bless all readers. As they proclaim Your words of life, strengthen their faith that they may read with conviction and boldness, and put into practice what they read. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DESIDERIO DESIDERAVI

Desiderio Desideravi - Apostolic Letter on the Liturgical Formation of the People of God. (DD), Published June 1922.

"I have ardently longed" derives from the words of Jesus, with which the account of the Last Supper opens. (Lk22:15). This letter outlines Pope Francis' theology of the liturgy derived from the principles spelled out in *Sacrosanctum Concilium, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. (Vatican II), which talks about the importance of the liturgy in the life of the church.

Pope Francis says in the first paragraph *"I do not intend to treat the question in an exhaustive way. I simply desire to offer some prompts or cues for reflection that can aid in the beauty and truth of Christian celebration"*

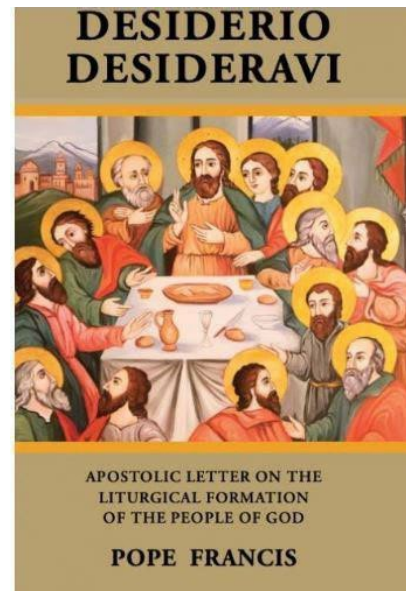
It is not very long and is an easy read.

Most of the letters produced by Pope Francis stay away from the complicated language used by earlier popes and translations.

"...Liturgy is about praise, about rendering thanks for the Passover of the Son whose power reaches our lives. The celebration concerns the reality of our being docile to the action of the Spirit who operates through it until Christ be formed in us".

Desiderio Desideravi, paragraph 41

As readers or lectors we are part of the celebration and it is important we do our role to the best of our ability. This includes knowing what the role is.



LITURGICAL SILENCE

A little about 'silence' in the Mass, because there are times when lectors need to observe short periods of silence.

"..Liturgical silence is... a symbol of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit who animates the entire action of the celebration".

We must not be afraid of silence but understand the reason for it.

Silence during the Mass allows us to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit for a clearer understanding of what we have just listened to.

"Among the ritual acts that belong to the whole assembly, silence occupies a place of absolute importance. Many times it is expressly prescribed in the rubrics...."

"...The entire Eucharistic celebration is immersed in the silence which precedes its beginning and which marks every moment of its ritual unfolding".
Desiderio Desideravi, paragraph 52.

Silence is present in the:

- penitential act:
- after the invitation "Let us pray":
- in the Liturgy of the Word
 - before the readings:
 - between the readings: and
 - after the homily;
- in the Eucharistic Prayer; and
- after communion.

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

The Liturgy of the Word is one of the two principal parts of the Mass. Just as the assembly is fed in the Liturgy of the Eucharist with the Body and Blood of Christ, so it is fed in the Liturgy of the Word with the words of God in Jesus Christ.

"When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his Word, proclaims the Gospel".
(General Instruction of the Roman Missal GIRM 29)

Our job is to ‘Proclaim’ the readings. This is very different to just reading them to an audience.

In proclaiming the Word of God, readers exercise their responsibility in mediating the presence of Christ. God speaks to the assembly through them, and, the impact of God’s message will depend significantly on their conviction, their preparation and their delivery.

Those who are called to be proclaimers of the Word at Mass, then, take on an important ministry. In fact, they are not ‘readers’ at all. Almost everyone can read, but only some can effectively proclaim the word of God. Those people who serve the liturgical gathering by proclaiming the scriptures are best described as ‘ministers of the word’.

Carrying out this role well requires:

- faith in the Word of God;
- a love of scripture;
- thorough preparation; and
- the skills needed for reading aloud in public.

“The reader has responsibility for not simply reading the word but assisting the assembly to hear the word. This will require the reader to be attentive to the assembly, and careful to allow for times of pause and silence as the assembly prepares to listen and, once the reading has been proclaimed, as it takes the word of God to heart”.

Liturgy Office of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

The more you understand, think about and practice the reading(s), the better you will be able to “proclaim” it. There is no way you can give the role justice if you leave it until you get to church to look at the reading.

SOME TIPS

1. Read the Scripture Passage through several times to familiarise yourself with the flow. If you cannot quite understand the context, use a bible to look at the paragraph or two before and after the reading to get a better context.
2. Practice reading it aloud. Ask a knowledgeable person if you do not know how to correctly pronounce a word.

Note: The Sunday readings are available on several websites and our weekly newsletter has the readings for the following Sunday. The Parish website has links to *Universalis* and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' <https://bible.usccb.org/readings/calendar>)

3. Get to the church well before the starting time (at least 15 minutes).
4. Check the reading in the lectionary.
5. Take the Lectionary to the back of the church ready to process in at the start of Mass. That is, if there is no Book of the Gospels.
6. If there is to be music ministry, check before Mass whether the whole Psalm is going to be sung, or whether just the response is to be sung and you read the verse. The same applies for the Gospel Acclamation (the Alleluia verse).

Note. The reading(s) you have prepared may be a slightly different version to that in the Lectionary, which is why it is important to check it/them before Mass and is one of several reasons for getting to the church early.

THE ENTRANCE PROCESSION

The proclaimer of the word either:

- leads the entrance procession, if there are no altar servers; or
- immediately follows the altar servers, if there are any.

During the procession, hold the Lectionary high.

When you reach the front of the church, take up position to the left of the altar so there is room for the deacon, priest and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) can also spread out in front of the altar.

Bow when the priest bows.

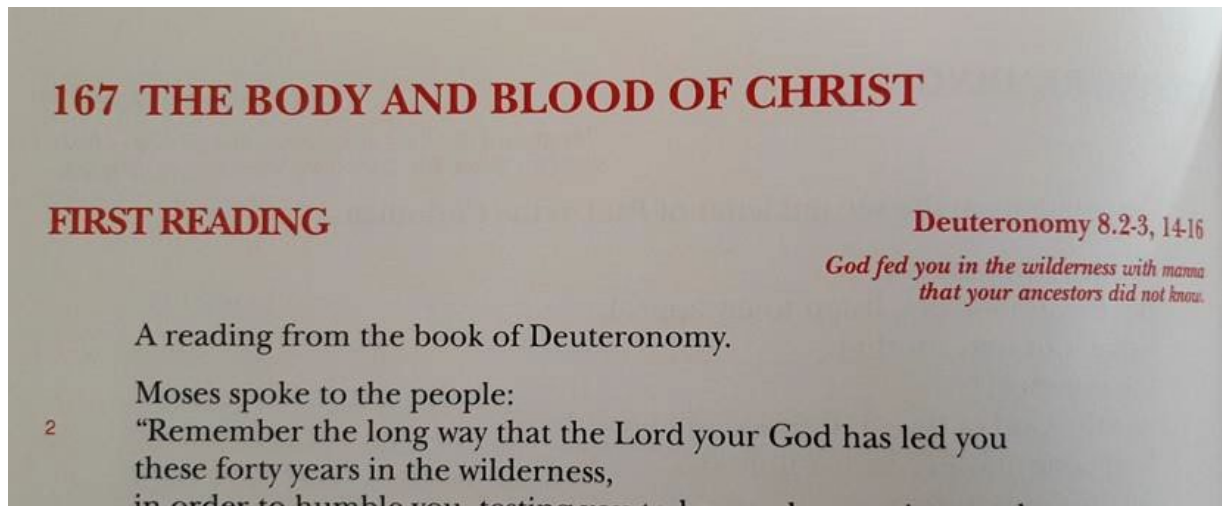
As the priest and deacon ascent the steps on the sanctuary, take the Lectionary to the ambo and ensure you open it at the correct place. This may sound like common sense, which it is, but there are times when it doesn't happen.

Ambo. The ambo is the symbol of the presence of the Word of God, just as the altar is the symbol of the sacrament of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word takes place at the ambo, which should always be in a permanent, solemn, dignified and prominent place on the sanctuary.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

1. Go to the foot of the altar as soon as the priest sits down after the 'Collect'.
2. Bow to the ambo or the altar.
3. Compose yourself, a few deep breaths before you start reading may be useful.
4. Breathing, pitch, pronunciation, tone, and pace all help with proclamation.
5. Do not read the words in the Lectionary that are in Red.

Note: The words in red are there for information and do not form part of the reading.



6. Always start with "A reading from..."
7. After you have said "A reading from", pause for two or three seconds of silence.
8. Look up at the congregation intermittently throughout the reading, this helps to keep the congregation engaged with what you are reading, and they are hearing.
9. Memorising the first and last lines of the reading will help with this, but do *NOT* memorise the whole reading.
10. It may help to use a finger to keep your place in the text so when you look down again you will not get lost.

11. Read expressively. The proclamation should be meaningful and thought provoking. Its central purpose is to nourish, refresh and strengthen the faith of the parishioner.
12. At the end of the reading, step back from the ambo and bow your head for a few moments. This allows some time of silence for the listeners to let the Word of God sink in. Then say, "*The Word of the Lord*".
13. The Responsorial Psalm. Start by reading the response and allowing the congregation to repeat it. Do not say "The Response is..."
14. Clearly indicate the end of each verse to the congregation e.g. by lowering your tone during the last line and looking up at the congregation.
15. Don't say "Response" at the end of each verse. Clearly indicate when you have come to the end of the verse, by looking up at the congregation and raising an arm in invitation for the congregation to respond.
16. At the end of the 'Alleluia go back to your place.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL/PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The Prayers of the Faithful are, as the name suggests prayers of the gathered members of the assembly, Body of Christ, not of the priest, or person who composed them.

The petitions of the Prayers of the Faithful make a connection between the Eucharist and the daily lives of Christians; therefore they must flow from the day-to-day lives of people in the community and from what is happening in the universal Church and in the world.

The petitions should be sober and succinct and, according to GIRM 69-71, should include at least four intentions:

- for the universal Church;
- for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;
- for those burdened with some kind of difficulty;
- for the local community.

The 'Welcome' newspaper often mentions what is coming up in the month and some of the events could be included in the prayers for the relevant Sunday.

We do not have prayers for the Pope, bishops, clergy etc. because they are prayed for in the Eucharistic Prayer.

The same applies for those who have died, though it may be appropriate, if someone has died very recently that a prayer is said for them and their family.

The parish has published a 'Liturgical Calendar', which also has things that are coming up and maybe included in the prayers.

What should not be included in the intentions? (Source: The Archdiocese of Baltimore Office of Worship.)

- Jargon or theological abstraction (e.g. That the pearly gates will open wide to accept our loved ones).
- Didacticism or "teachiness", or lecturing the absent and presumed guilty (e.g. That the Holy Father and bishops will be faithful to the true teaching of Jesus Christ)
- Telling God what to do and how to do it!
- An examination of conscience.
- Propaganda, political and/or viewpoint positions (e.g. climate change or care for the environment).
- Thanksgiving. The purpose of the prayers of intercession are to ask God for what we and others need, not to express personal or even communal thanks. That is what the Eucharistic Prayer is for.

Concerns must be expressed with great sensitivity to the complexities of human situations.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

- Go up to the ambo just before the Creed is finished.
- After the priest's introductory prayer, read the prayers of the faithful slowly.
- Do not announce "Prayers of the Faithful" because they have already started when the Priest says the opening prayer.
- Pause (3-4 seconds) before you say "Lord hear us" or its equivalent to allow the listeners to pray with you.

When you have read the last prayer, and the people have said the response, wait until the priest has said the concluding prayer and then return to your seat.