

Parish Grouping - Ministry in Liturgy - Session 2.

“The Church in 2020 will be a very different one to the one we encounter today. The institutional role of the Church in Irish society will be different. The Church must learn to focus on what is essential in its renewal. That renewal must be a renewal in faith, in an encounter with Jesus Christ who is the way, the truth and the life. The Church’s role in society will be different, but not irrelevant. Its contribution will come from a deeper understanding of who Jesus is and how Jesus provides answers to the basic questions about life...**To know Jesus we must know the scriptures...**”

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin speaking at the Rite of Election for those seeking to join the Catholic Church. Pro Cathedral Dublin - Feb 26th 2012 .

“The Church has always venerated the divine scriptures as she venerated the Body of the Lord, in so far as she [the Church] never ceases, particularly in the sacred liturgy, to partake of the bread of life and to offer it to the faithful from the one table of the Word of God and the Body of Christ.”

(Vatican II’s Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 21).

In liturgical proclamation, the scriptures become truly what they are...the word of God at work, transforming us and all creation in the shape of Jesus’ death and resurrection. (*Verbum Domini*)

THE FOURFOLD PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST:

- The assembled people; ‘Where two or three are gathered in my name...’
- In the Word proclaimed; for it is Christ himself who speaks in and through the scriptures.
- In the person of the priest who acts in the person of Christ the head; **In persona Christi capite**.
- In the Eucharistic species, Body & Blood, this is the most perfect presence.

THE PLACE OF THE WORD:

- God speaks to us through the proclamation of the Scriptures.
- Ministers of the Word are the mouth piece of God
- Function is to provide the people with a meaningful encounter with the Word of God.
- People need to understand the word that is being proclaimed – if the minister doesn’t grasp the sense of the text then it will be more difficult for the people to grasp it

MINISTERS OF THE WORD – BE PREPARED.

HOW TO PREPARE – LECTIO DIVINA.

Read it through several times, silently and aloud.

- Note words or phrases that strike you.

- Note any questions that arise for you.

Reflect/Meditate silently on what you have read. Where do you see yourself in the story?

Make a **Prayer** of something that strikes you.

Ask yourself how this text can imp**Act** on your own life.



WHEN?

Get the text early in the week look at the Missal, get a missalette in the Church – Text available on line at Catholic Ireland.net

Take 5 or 10 minutes every day.

If possible meet with the other readers and go through the process of reading, reflecting, praying and putting into action.

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WHY?

For your own prayer life and relationship with God.

For better understanding of the text.

That you will provide a meaningful encounter with the Word of God.

THE SKILLS.

1. BODY LANGUAGE:

- Slow considered movements – Remember as well as proclaiming the Word of God we also lead people in prayer. Erratic movements are a distraction and people think you do not know what you are doing.
- At the Ambo – Be confident stand attentively but not rigidly, take your time, encourage silence by having some silence.
- Make eye contact – Looking up from the book and at people involves them, it also lets them see that you are familiar with the text.
- Avoid fidgeting – Especially if sitting waiting to read. Do not read from a missalette when waiting as it appears you don't know what you are doing.

2. USING YOUR VOICE: - Remember Hyacinth...!

- Read from the Book - (not a missalette) rather than to the Book - Try to keep your head elevated.
- Speak Slowly - Approximately half the rate of normal speech.
- Speak Loudly - Ensure that your sound is reaching all areas within the Church (*the microphone is a tool not a crutch – don't rely on it – it only projects what is there already*).
- Speak Clearly - Avoid muttering.
- Speak Directly - To all the members within the congregation.
- Breath Control - Breathing deeply can help to calm ones nerves and also to regulate their rate of speech.
- Avoid coughing - Coughing into a microphone can also be very off-putting to listeners.
- Avoid being too close to the microphone especially for 'B' 'P' and 'T' sounds

3. ON THE DAY

- Arrive Early.
- Familiarise yourself with the layout of both the church and Liturgy. (e.g. Where the Microphone switch is and how to adjust it.)
- Greet the priest and other ministers (including other readers and psalmists.)
- Ask if there are any changes to the Liturgy (e.g. Will the psalm be sung? Or is there a deacon present to read the Prayer of the Faithful?)
- Make sure the Lectionary is placed on the ambo and that the coloured ribbons have firmly secured the page from which you will read. (*Also write the page number on you hand-Just in case!*)

4. FROM SKILL TO ART: FOUR SUGGESTIONS. (*Adapted from: The Ministry of Lectors by James A Wallace*)

- Seek Feedback: Family and Friends – accept don't question, practice can make permanent not perfect.
- Keep updating Attend workshops when on offer either parish or Diocesan.
- Learn from your peers.
- Learn to love the Scriptures.