

## The Lector's Ministry

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 the 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 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 the 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's word,  
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 filed with a drama you need not supply,  
but must always convey.

Like the prophet,  
you will always 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 for constructive criticism  
and humbled by any praise you receive.

Many lectors want to read at the Easter Vigil  
but not all will be assigned;  
be patient in waiting your turn  
and nourished 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 they have heard  
and rejoice in the work  
the Lord has accomplished through you.

Be faithful to the work you do, for through it the Lord  
saves His people.

*"Yours is a Share"* The Call of Liturgical Ministry  
Austin Fleming