

# The ministry of **Proclaiming the word** Five tips for Readers

*Lord, be on my lips and in my heart,  
that I may worthily proclaim your holy word.*

## **1. Read the text beforehand**

Read the text before you proclaim it. The more familiar you are with it, the better you will read it. Consider it quietly and pray for guidance.

To understand it better, find it in your personal Bible at home, and explore the context. All readers should have their own copy of the Jerusalem Bible, which is usually the Bible read in Church. If there are awkward names of people or places find out how to pronounce these, and do so with confidence.

## **2. Practical preparation**

Arrive well before the Mass starts. Check the page in the lectionary. Check the microphone. Be neat and presentable. You can help people to focus on the word attentively by the way you look, or the way you behave. Prepare prayerfully and quietly for the Mass. The priest may ask you to invite those gathered to silence as Mass approaches.

### **3. Prayer**

With all this preparation you should be in the right frame of mind when you approach the ambo (sometimes called the lectern) to read. Remember that you are called to minister to the people of God. The privilege of the Reader is to be the channel of God's word for others. You as a Reader will also grow in your faith through the ministry.

### **4. Delivery**

Because you have prayed about the text beforehand you will proclaim it with understanding and reverence. Speak distinctly and in a measured way. Consider the purpose of the passage you are reading. Make good use of pauses. Above all, speak slowly, but not too slowly. Many Readers read too fast. Look up occasionally but don't stare at people. If you are proclaiming more than one reading, ensure you leave a good pause between these.

### **5. Growing in the ministry**

Ask for feedback on your reading with honest friends afterwards. Learn from your mistakes. Do all you can to familiarise yourself with the Scriptures. For more information, useful resources and guidance about the Bible, visit the Scripture section on the Bishops' Conference website at **[www.thewordofthelord.co.uk](http://www.thewordofthelord.co.uk)**

*The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. He provides me with speech so that I may know how to reply to the wearied. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple.*  
*Isaiah 50:4-5*