

To: Proclaimers of the Word

TO LOVE AND TO SERVE

[Fr James Lyons]

*Yours is a share in the work of the Spirit, of all that is holy, for in who you are and in what you do is found the most powerful experience of the sacred...
Yours is the kingdom community whose very assembling is sacrament of God's presence in the world.* [Fr Austin Fleming, Theologian]

The Eucharist lies at the heart of every Catholic community. Together we love and serve: in our greeting of one another and in the welcome we extend to visitors; in the prayer we offer, as we proclaim the Word, and share with each other the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. **From our own prayer and reflection** flow reverence and service - not for our own glory or satisfaction but for the good of all.

Within the Eucharist you are Proclaimers of the Word, privileged stewards of God's greatest gifts to the parish – the people you serve. It is vital that you keep yourselves in readiness for this service, not only by personally preparing for your individual commitment, but by supporting those who share ministry with you.

The Word of God is something alive and active....[Hebrews, 4:12]
When you proclaim our sacred scriptures to the people, you do much more than recite a text. You release the power of God into the hearts of those listening! You speak a Living Word into lives often broken with worry, struggling to cope, hurting or tormented, or perhaps indifferent and tired. Your proclamation carries peace, comfort and challenge – a privileged responsibility.

A word announces presence.

A word touches the soul.

A word is breath incarnate

A word is mystery, beauty, power and grace

A word can heal or hurt, encourage or destroy

Those who proclaim or serve the Word of God are sacred vessels, made holy by the Word they carry. Preparation for this sacred privilege must be given the highest priority.

**Something which has existed since the beginning,
which we have heard,
which we have seen with our own eyes,
which we have watched
and touched with our own hands,
the Word of life –
this is our theme.**

[1 John, 1:1]

SOME DO'S AND DON'T'S IN MINISTRY

1. DO treat your particular ministry as an extension of yourself
2. DO make a conscious preparation for each time you serve
3. DO pray for humility, for faithfulness and in thanksgiving for your ministry
4. DO pray for others involved with you as ministers
5. DO pray for those you serve
6. DO appreciate the other ministries that are part of the Liturgy in which you serve
7. DO arrive in plenty of time to check for changes in the schedule and to pray with all involved in the leadership of the Liturgy

1. DON'T excuse yourself from your turn to serve for anything but the most serious of reasons
2. DON'T assume it won't matter if you're not there; that there'll always be someone to take your place. There rarely is!
3. DON'T take your role for granted. In your ministry you are not doing anyone a favour; you are responding to a call to use your gift for the good of the whole community
4. DON'T forget that in serving you are yourself being served
5. DON'T miss the opportunity your time of service gives you, to see the face of Jesus in those you serve
6. DON'T worry that you may not be perfect in your ministry; you are not expected to be perfect, only faithful
7. DON'T get discouraged by criticism – some will be misplaced and negative, the rest will be very positive. We can all learn.
8. DON'T stop wondering at the goodness of God in creating such a variety of gifts