

Epistle Chanters' Etiquette and Guidelines

As readers of the Epistle, we have some special privileges as well as peculiar responsibilities before Christ. We have the privilege of helping to proclaim the word of God in worship in such a way as to allow all of us to grow closer to our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ. We also have the privilege of learning God's word more assiduously. Let us be thankful for these and all of God's blessings for us.

We also have the responsibility of proclaiming God's word with clarity, dignity, care and attentiveness. We are readers to serve Christ and edify our brothers and sisters in Christ. Hence we have the task of setting a proper example, enabling us all to grow together in the blessings of the grace of God and in the worship of Him. Below are some guidelines which can help us to move ahead with the task at hand. These apply equally to primary and secondary readers:

- Readers of the Epistle should be communing regularly and should have recently confessed.
- Readers do well to prepare their assigned texts *in advance*, preferably before the assigned day.
- Readers are expected to maintain proper attire, dressing both modestly and with sufficient care. Business casual is sufficient: button up shirts (ties are encouraged, but not required), sensible trousers and shoes for men; sensible and dignified attire for women. We certainly know what proper Church attire is.
- If the reader is standing with the choir during the day of the assigned reading, it is recommended, albeit not required, to proceed to the back of the nave and proceed up the center aisle to the place for reading, rather than proceeding directly from the choir. It is perfectly acceptable to leave the choir as early as needed to proceed *without haste*.
- The reader is to attend to the proper praying of the post-communion prayers in Church after the Divine Liturgy, themselves praying the prayers or ensuring that someone else does so. We have been fortunate to have so many dutiful readers of these prayers; let us do our best to further this.
- If, for some reason, one is unable to read the Epistle on the assigned day, it is the responsibility of the primary reader to inform the secondary reader, Brian Ephrem Fitzgerald, and Fr. Noah *by e-mail with sufficient notice* to facilitate seamless coverage of the Epistle reading.

The unexpected does happen and sometimes it may be difficult to meet some of these guidelines. God certainly understands, but let us try to do what lies within our power to follow these principles, since they can help us all to worship Christ more felicitously. Reading schedules will be published quarterly and will provide advanced notification of the Epistle readings, the location of the texts in the Epistle Book, the primary and secondary readers, and the Ecclesiastical day of the year (the Ecclesiastical day in parentheses is the actual day of the text when it differs from the current Ecclesiastical day). Days other than Sunday are placed in square brackets. This should allow us to prepare the assigned texts well in advance as well as to anticipate many scheduling issues.

Please bear in mind that the Epistle schedule is not intended to be inflexible. The unexpected often occurs and we must adapt when needed. Also, since this system of scheduling is new, it is certain that some unanticipated circumstances will arise, requiring some revision. Let us be prayerful, supportive, and cooperative as we work out these things together. May God bless you in your precious ministry!