

HELPFUL DOs & DON'Ts

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

- So much depends on the readers. It is a demanding ministry. READERS, it is vital to prepare. Make sense of the reading with your mind and with your voice. Take your time. Don't be afraid to pause.
- Start using the phrase THE WORD OF THE LORD at the end of the reading instead of THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD. This will be the new translation, similar to when the priest declares THE BODY OF CHRIST at Communion.
- During the responsorial psalm DO NOT SAY 'Response' after each verse. Just look up at the people and if need be say the first word of the response to encourage them to respond.
- Give some time in between the readings, especially if there is only one reader. Do not run one reading into the next.
- The readings are best read by different voices if possible. Two readers are always preferable at Sunday Masses - not always available though!

Praying the Mass

2. LISTENING

19th June

Welcoming the 3rd Edition of the Roman Missal

LISTENING TO THE WORD

Listening to the Word of God is something we do long before we come to Mass. God speaks to us in so many different ways - through the events of life and death, in personal prayer, in the sacraments and through the Scriptures.

His speaking to us is never in doubt. We are told of this in the Scriptures and are shown it in the lives of the saints. More in question is our ability to listen to Him and our readiness to respond to what we hear.

Not many of us are good listeners. Hearing comes naturally but not listening. We can hear words, we can hear what is being said but listening involves something more. It requires us to be attentive *to the person* speaking to us.

Listening to the person means making a commitment to be attentive to the person speaking. This is true of our relationships with each other and with God. This attentiveness begins not just when the Scripture is proclaimed. We need to develop it as part of our life – some call it *active listening*.

Have our churches lost something of that culture of quiet attentiveness to a mysterious presence?
Has the chattiness of the street displaced the silence needed for inner attentiveness in our churches? How can we recover this?
Could we keep our chattiness, which is also important, to the end of Mass?

In the quiet times before Mass begins maybe we could read over the readings for that Sunday.

- Note that the first reading and the psalm and the Gospel should all share a theme.
- The second reading tends to stand by itself. It is part of a continuous reading from one of the New Testament letters over a number of Sundays.
- Sometimes the response to the psalm can give you a clue to the theme of the Scriptures for that Sunday.

Become familiar with the different books of the Bible: where are the readings from?

- The Old Testament is made up of historical books, books of poetry (e.g. the Psalms) and books of sayings or wisdom literature. There are also the teachings and the warnings of the Prophets. Notice the names of the Prophets.
- The New Testament readings are from the letters written to congregations in the early Church; Christian living in Rome, Ephesus, Corinth, Colossus etc. In Eastertime they are from the Acts of the Apostles.

They were written for Christians thousands of years ago but they also speak to us today.