## From a sermon by Cesarius of Arles
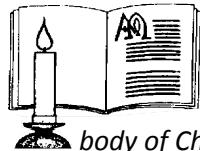
*I have a question for you, brothers and sisters. Which do you think more important - the word of God or the body of Christ?*

*If you want to answer correctly, you must tell me that the word of God is no less important than the body of Christ.*

*How careful we are, when the body of Christ is distributed to us, not to let any bit of it fall to the ground from our hand!*

*But we should be just as careful not to let slip from our hearts the word of God that is addressed to us.*

## A Prayer in Preparation
## for Proclaiming the Word of God

Blessed are you, Lord God, King of the Universe:
You have sent your Word to become one of us,
Jesus Christ, our brother and our saviour.

Through his words you give us your life,
through his example you teach us to love,
through his death and rising
you give us eternal life.

Father, send your Spirit into my heart
to guide me as I prepare to proclaim your word,
and help me to speak *your* word to *your* people.

Open their hearts to hear your word,
that together we may praise your name,

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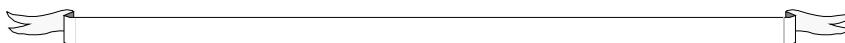
# Blessed John Henry Newman Parish
*Where Heart Speaks to Heart*

# Proclaim the Word

# Guidelines for Readers

### PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS!
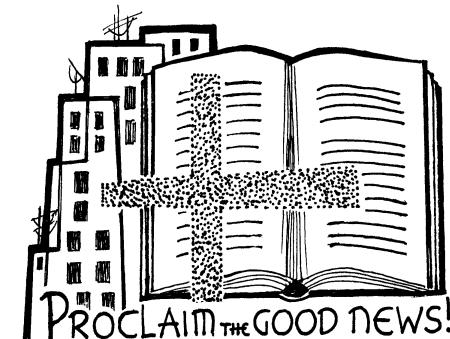
Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it

## AT HOME

♦ Read through the texts of the readings and try to find out:

⇒ the nature of the text: poetry, history, instruction, prophecy, etc.?

⇒ its purpose: to encourage, to inform, to record events, to reply to questions, to cajole etc.

## AT CHURCH

♦ Before Mass begins locate your reading in the Lectionary so that you know that it is the correct reading.

♦ After the Opening Prayer approach the sanctuary [with the other reader] and bow to the altar before going to the ambo. The reader who is not currently reading sits down on one of the nearby seats.

## PROCLAIMING THE WORD

♦ Wait until the congregation is settled before announcing the reading. Introduce the reading using the words given in black in the lectionary (there is no need to say: "The first/ second reading").

♦ It is a good thing to have some eye contact with the congregation. This helps to emphasise that the Word of God is an encounter and not merely a listening exercise.

♦ Be comfortable with your own voice and dialect. There is no need to change the way you speak. What is important is that we do not rush through a reading. It is good to pause at appropriate points and to allow the meaning, movement and mood of the text to be expressed in the way we read.

♦ Following the first reading there should be a pause for reflection (the length of a slow *Glory be*).

♦ At *Sunday Masses,* except when the cantor leads the **Responsorial Psalm**, the whole congregation will recite the Psalm together. (There is no need to introduce this saying either "*The responsorial psalm* "or "*the response to the psalm is*..." etc...)

♦ On *weekdays* the reader leads the congregation by reciting the response in a clear manner and leading the congregation in its recitation of the response (Again there is no need to say either "*The responsorial psalm* "or "*the response to the psalm is*...") After each verse of the psalm it helps to lift your eyes from the text and lead the congregation in the response.

♦ Once the second reading has been proclaimed there is another pause (the length of a slow *Glory be*).

♦ Except for when the cantor leads the Gospel Acclamation the Reader leads with a bold acclamation of the approaching Gospel, the congregation will stand automatically as the first Alleluia is sung or recited. There is therefore, no need to say "*please stand to greet the gospel*".

♦ If the whole of the *Gospel Acclamation* verse is to be sung the readers return to their places making way for the deacon or priest to approach the ambo for the Gospel. On Sundays when the Book of the Gospels is being used please place the Lectionary on the table.

*Appropriate Dress*
Please ensure that you are dressed neatly so that others do not form the impression that you are casual about this wonderful ministry.