

In order to confer the Rite of Lector, the following conditions should be met:

1. The following are requirements for admission to the ministries:

a) the presentation of a petition that has been freely made out and signed by the aspirant to the Ordinary (the bishop and, in clerical institutes, the major superior) who has the right to accept the petition;

b) a suitable age and special qualities to be determined by the conference of bishops;

c) a firm will to give faithful service to God and the Christian people.

2. The ministries are conferred by the Ordinary (the bishop and, in clerical institutes, the major superior) through the liturgical rite *De institutione lectoris* and *De institutione acolythi* as revised by the Apostolic See.

3. An interval, determined by the Holy See or the conferences of bishops, shall be observed between the conferring of the ministries of reader and acolyte whenever more than one ministry is conferred on the same person.

4. Unless they have already done so, candidates for ordination as deacons and priests are to receive the ministries of reader and acolyte and are to exercise them for a suitable time, in order to be better disposed for the future service of the word and of the altar. Dispensation from receiving these ministries on the part of such candidates is reserved to the Holy See.

5. The conferring of ministries does not bring with it the right to support or remuneration from the Church.

6. The rite of institution of readers and acolytes will soon be published by the competent department of the Roman Curia.

The essential norms of this document were later incorporated into canons 230 and 1035 of the Code of Canon Law.

Canon 230 §1. Lay men who possess the age and qualifications established by decree of the conference of bishops can be admitted on a stable basis through the prescribed liturgical rite to the ministries of lector and acolyte.

Nevertheless, the conferral of these ministries does not grant them the right to obtain support or remuneration from the Church.

A man can thus be instituted lector without necessarily aspiring to become an acolyte, but it does not appear that one may become an acolyte without passing through lectorate. For many practical reasons these ministries are almost exclusively conferred upon candidates for the priesthood and diaconate.

Canon 1035 says the following:

§1. Before anyone is promoted to the permanent or transitional diaconate, he is required to have received the ministries of lector and acolyte and to have exercised them for a suitable period of time.

§2. There is to be an interval of at least six months between the conferral of the ministry of acolyte and the diaconate.

With respect to the functions of the ministry the General Introduction to the Roman Missal has this to say:

D. The duties of the lector

194. In coming to the altar, when no deacon is present, the lector, wearing approved attire, may carry the Book of the Gospels, which is to be slightly elevated. In that case, the lector walks in front of the priest but otherwise along with the other ministers.

195. Upon reaching the altar, the lector makes a profound bow with the others. If he is carrying the Book of the Gospels, he approaches the altar and places the Book of the Gospels upon it. Then the lector takes his own place in the sanctuary with the other ministers.

The Liturgy of the Word

196. The lector reads from the ambo the readings that precede the Gospel. If there is no psalmist, the lector may also proclaim the responsorial Psalm after the first reading.

197. When no deacon is present, the lector, after the introduction by the priest, may announce from the ambo the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful.

198. If there is no singing at the Entrance or at Communion and the antiphons in the Missal are not recited by the faithful, the lector may read them at the appropriate time (cf. above, nos. 48, 87).

Before conferring the ministry of lector, the bishop may say this or similar words:

Dear sons in Christ: Through his Son, who became man for us, God the Father has revealed the mystery of salvation and brought it to fulfillment. Jesus Christ made all things known to us and then entrusted his Church with the mission of preaching the Gospel to the whole world.

As readers and bearers of God's word, you will assist in this mission, and so take on a special office within the Christian community; you will be given a responsibility in the service of the faith, which is rooted in the word of God. You will proclaim that word in the liturgical assembly, instruct children and adults in the faith and prepare them to receive the sacraments worthily. You will bring the message of salvation to those who have not yet received it. Thus with your help men and women will come to know God our Father and his Son Jesus Christ, whom he sent, and so be able to reach eternal life.

In proclaiming God's word to others, accept it yourselves in obedience to the Holy Spirit. Meditate on it constantly, so that each day you will have a deeper love of the Scriptures, and in all you say and do show forth to the world our Savior, Jesus Christ.