

Scripture

When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, ‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’.

Luke 4:16-21

Prayer

*May the word of God
always be heard in this place,
as it unfolds the mystery of Christ
before you
and achieves your salvation
within the Church.*

*Lord,
grant your servants
a constant deepening
in faith and in grace,
so that whenever we honour
your Son’s loving presence among us,
we will be led to a more
fruitful sharing
in the memorial of our redemption*

Prayers from the

Order of Blessing of a new Lectern.

*Christ be in my head,
and in my thinking,
Christ be in my heart,
and in my loving,
Christ be in my living,
and in my dying,
Christ be in my resurrection,
and throughout eternity,
Christ be in me,
now and for evermore. Amen.*

This leaflet is one of a series of resources prepared by the Liturgy Office to accompany the publication of *Consecrated for Worship*. Excerpts from *Consecrated for Worship* and this leaflet © 2006 Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

Excerpts from *Book of Blessings* © 1987, ICEL, and from the *New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and are used by permission. All rights reserved.

Consecrated for Worship is published by CTS [www.cts-online.org.uk].

Further resources can be found at www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/CFW

**Liturgy
Office**
ENGLAND
& WALES

Consecrated for Worship



Christ is present in his word;
as he carries out
the mystery of salvation,
he sanctifies us
and offers the Father
perfect worship...

That word
constantly proclaimed
in the Liturgy
is always, then,
a living, active work
through the power
of the Holy Spirit.

It expresses the Father’s love
that never fails
in its effectiveness towards us.

Lectionary for Mass, Introduction 4

The Ambo

When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the Gospel.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) 29

The Church teaches that at the Mass the people of God are served from two tables: the table of the word and the table of the sacrament. From both these tables the faithful of God receive Christ himself, present in the word proclaimed and in the bread that has become his Body and the wine that has become his Blood.

It is therefore important when the Holy Scriptures are read everything be done to help make it clear to those present that these words we hear are not just any words, but are the living word of God.

There are many ways in which the importance of the word is emphasised. Special ministers are trained and commissioned for the work of proclaiming God's word. The word is proclaimed only from books of dignity and beauty. We respond to the readings by affirming that this is indeed the word of the Lord and offering our thanks to God for his word. When the reading is from the Gospels we mark the especial dignity of this word in additional ways — we stand and sing our Gospel Acclamation; we trace the sign of the cross on our forehead, lips and heart, to indicate our desire to take this word to heart, to ponder its meaning, and to carry its message to the world. Sometimes we use candles and lights to further emphasise the significance that this reading has for us.

Of particular importance in establishing the importance that the word of God has for the Church is the ambo. This should normally be fixed and not simply a moveable lectern. The material and design of the ambo should themselves point to the permanence and beauty of God's saving word

The dignity of the word of God requires that the church have a place that is suitable for the

proclamation of the word and toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns during the Liturgy of the Word. GIRM 309

In the same way that the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist are so closely related as to make up one act of worship, so it is appropriate that there be an evident relationship between the ambo and the altar. Sometimes this is achieved through their being made from the same materials, sometimes from a sharing of other aspects of design. However they should not look the same, for they have different functions.

The dignity of the ambo requires that only a minister of the word should make use of it. The ambo is used exclusively for the proclamation of God's word in the Scriptures, including the singing of the responsorial psalm; the elucidation and application of the word in the Homily and general intercessions; and also the Easter proclamation (Exsultet).

Celebrating the Mass 98

Provision should be made to allow the easy use of the ambo by readers of different height (for example by means of a temporary or fold-down step for use by children or others). Where possible provision should be made for a reader in a wheelchair, taking into account issues of access, space and reading height.

The place of proclamation should be appropriately lit, so that the reader may clearly see the page and be clearly seen by the assembly. It is generally necessary too that provision be made for microphones and loop systems, so that all may hear the word of God without difficulty.

