

Lector Scheduling

1 Lector Policies and Goals

There are a number of policy statements and goals that drive the lector scheduling process:

- (a) There are no favorite Masses or Mass preferences or blanket Mass exclusions
- (b) As much as possible, the lectors at any Mass should consist of a mixture of genders.
- (c) Spouses should be able to be assigned together.
- (d) The assignments should be distributed as equally as possible among the lectors throughout the scheduling period.
- (e) The assignments for a given lector should be distributed as equally as possible among the three Mass times.
- (f) Assignments for any given lector should be split equally between L1, L2 and L3.

2 General Process

2.1 When

The schedule is published 4 times per year, covering March-April-May, June-July-August, September-October-November, and December-January-February.

Special Feast days are handled separately. Easter and Christmas (if it falls on a Sunday) are not part of the regular schedule.

2.2 How

The scheduling process can be likened to dealing cards from a deck, only instead of suits and rank, each card contains the name of a lector.

The deck is dealt one-by-one and placed onto a calendar in date-Mass-reader order, that is, the first name is assigned to L1 at 5:00 Mass on the first day of the scheduling period; the second name, to L2; the third name, to L3; the fourth name, to L1 at the 8:30 Mass, and so on. The names are not assigned at random.

There is a provision for spouses to be assigned to the same Mass.

In addition, a lector may exclude a date (for vacation, or whatever). In that case, the next “card” is turned over, and *that* lector is assigned to that slot.

If the deck is exhausted, the deck is turned over and the process continues without shuffling.

3 Frequently Asked Questions

3.1 Why not assign lectors randomly?

Random assignment would violate principles (d), (e) and (f). A lector could get two weeks in a row, followed by two months of non-assignment.

3.2 Why not let lectors assign themselves?

Some parishes do this. Our EMs do this. But since we have policy (a), we have formal assignment of lectors. Lectors cannot “cherry-pick” their assignments.

3.3 Why not assign by Mass time?

Policy (a) prohibits the grouping of lectors into three subgroups. The community should be able to see and hear (eventually) all the lectors in the ministry.

In addition, if the groups were of different sizes, then the lectors in the smallest group (Saturday, 5:00) would get more frequent assignments.

3.4 Why does it seem that I always get <L1, L2, L3> or always <5:00, 8:30, 10:30>?

We have data going back 15 years – even to the days when five Masses were celebrated in Fenlon Hall. Over the long haul, lectors do indeed get 1/3 L1 assignments, 1/3 L2 assignments, and 1/3 L3 assignments. Likewise for the Mass times. Now, within any one scheduling period, it is possible to, for example, receive two L3 assignments. But spread over the years, the assignments even out.

Note, substitutions and swaps may skew the data.