General Guidelines for
Children's Liturgy of the Word

✧ Before Mass

Prepare the Gathering Room:

- setting out the candle,
- set up the lectern and placing liturgical cloth on it (violet (blue) for Advent; white for Christmas and Easter, purple for Lent)
- get the CD player out of the sound system cabinet and prepare music.
- fold children’s bulletins.
- set us the appropriate display board.
- place the bookmark in the appropriate place in the Children’s Lectionary

✧ Opening Procession

Join the opening procession at the back of the church.

Process up the aisle carrying the Lectionary high.

Stand up in the sanctuary on the west side of the church until the presider invites the children to gather at the front. Hold the lectionary lower in front of you while he does this.
Raise the Lectionary high again to lead the children to the Gathering Room.

✧ **Liturgy of the Word**

Try to maintain a tone of prayerful reverence.

Use the prepared format and display boards to lead the children in prayer.

Children should stand during the Gospel Acclamation and the reading of the Gospel.

The reader should proclaim the Word slowly and carefully.

Some of the words in the Scripture may need to be explained to the children.

✧ **Homily**

Because the homily is meant to speak to the hearts (and developmental stages of children) a good deal of freedom is allowed in how this is done. (E.g. use of supplemental stories, drama, puppetry). The guiding principal should be that one is using a form of storytelling to help connect the Scriptures with the lives of the children.

There is a bench that is full of biblical puppets and simple biblical costumes that can be used.
We do NOT do craft projects at time, however, as this is not a catechetical programme.

There are a number of excellent resources on the shelf which may be borrowed by any leader of Liturgy of the Word for Children.

Every Minister of the Word for Children should have a missalette at home to help them prepare their “homily” for the Sunday they are leading.

✧ **Prayers of the Faithful**

Prayers should reflect the Scripture of the Sunday.

We should pray for our local community and the broader world. We should also pray for the sick and those who have recently died.

Children should always be invited to add their own prayers.

✧ **Return to the Assembly**

Children return to the assembly at the time of the Offertory Chant.
The Altar Servers are supposed to let you know when this is. Most of the time this happens, but if the time seems inordinately long, someone should check to be sure that they haven’t forgotten.

Children should not be sent out during the General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful).

Children are instructed to line up at the door (with the door closed). They are given bulletins and then the door is opened and they return quietly to the assembly.

They often need to be reminded that they need to leave quietly.

✧ **After the Children have been Sent Forth**

Extinguish the candle.

Return the CD player to the Sound System cupboard.

Tidy the centre so that it looks like a Sacred Space ready for the next group.