

INTRODUCTION TO HOMILETICS

FORMAT AND OVERALL PLAN

This class will be conducted as a workshop. Instructors and students will share their experience and expertise, in order to aid one another in finding an authentic voice for proclaiming the gospel in a liturgical setting. Students will preach homilies, and feedback will be given by both instructors and students. Readings will be assigned, although there will be little time for direct discussion of the readings. It is assumed that everyone will be continually on the lookout for information and enrichment from a variety of sources, and will find ways to incorporate what they have discovered both into their preaching and into their contributions to other preachers.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this semester, students should be able to:

1. Integrate seminary training and life experience to compose a lectionary-based liturgical homily.
2. Articulate their criteria in exegeting a scriptural passage and a congregation.
3. Preach a homily with some confidence and grace.
4. Use theological and rhetorical language to analyze their own preaching and that of others.
5. Relate preaching to other aspects of the liturgical context.
6. Relate preaching to other aspects of their vocational goals.
7. Begin to discern the bases of their authority as preachers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Compose and preach four full homilies** (three in class and one outside of class).
 - a) ***In-class homilies are to be 10 minutes long. Time them!***
 - b) Lectons for the homilies will be assigned and negotiated.
 - c) The class is your congregation. **Preach to us**, not to an imagined "normal" congregation.
Corollary: No previews or re-runs of homilies intended for other situations, such as field ed.
 - d) **Bring a video tape** the **second** time you preach. Plan to review the tape with your preaching partner(s) and/or with one of the instructors. On any occasion, you may, if you wish, bring your own **audio recorder** to record feedback on your homily or immortalize other portions of the class.
 - e) **Plan, practice, or de-brief with another class member.** Does not need to be the same person each time. During the discussion following your preaching, your preaching partner will also help you by **taking notes** on what is said.
 - f) **Hand in 2 copies of your notes or manuscript** for each in-class homily. The instructors will give you written feedback on these.
 - g) **At the end of your handed-in manuscript, add the following notes:**
 - 1) What you believe your central message is (one sentence).
 - 2) Things you were experimenting with, if relevant.
 - 3) Who your preaching partner is.

2. **Hand in 4 Reflection papers (1-2 pages each) the class after you preached.**

In each of them, include the following:

- a) Describe your process of preparation, including works referred to.
- b) Describe how you enlisted the help of your preaching partner.
- c) Summarize and reflect on the feedback you received. What did you learn from it?
- d) **After the homily that was videotaped**, include a reflection on what you observed while **viewing the tape with another class member. This reflection must be signed by the other student!**
- e) **After preaching in a “live” setting**, describe the context, the setting, and your evaluation of how it went. Tell how you were able to elicit feedback. Hand in the manuscript of the sermon with the reflection paper.
- f) **After your final homily, whether it is in-class or outside**, include a paragraph or so reflecting on your progress over the whole semester, and dreaming a bit about where you might be headed next in your ministry of preaching.

3. **Listen attentively, offer helpful feedback to other preachers, and participate** in several in-class exercises.

4. **Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest** reading assignments.

5. **Attendance at all classes is required.** You will hear many more homilies than you will preach in this class. Thus, you will help your fellow students, and learn a great deal more yourself, by listening carefully and providing constructive, honest, supportive feedback and analysis. The feedback that you offer to the other students is as important for your own learning as the preaching you do yourself, and building a community of trust requires consistency in presence. If you foresee a conflict, speak to one of us **in advance**.

6. This course is graded **pass-fail only**. All requirements must be met in order to pass the course. Students will receive a narrative evaluation in response to their self-evaluations. The objectives of the course will serve as the outline for the instructors' evaluations.

REQUIRED READINGS

Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Publishing Services, United States Catholic Conference, 1982. (ISBN 1-555868-509)

Campbell, Charles L. *The Word Before the Powers*. Louisville: WJKP, 2002. (ISBN 664-22233-1)

Childers, Jana L. *Performing the Word*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998. (ISBN 0687074231)

Clader, Linda L. *Voicing the Vision*. Harrisburg: Morehouse, 2003. (ISBN 0-8192-1932-0)

Malina/ Rohrbaugh, *A Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992 (ISBN 0-8005-2562-5)

Taylor, Barbara Brown. *The Preaching Life*. Cambridge: Cowley, 1993. (ISBN 1-56101-074)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Sept. 6 Introduction to preparation and exegesis. 15 preachers.

First preaching assignment: an assigned narrative pericope from Mark's Gospel.

13 4 preachers. Read *Fulfilled In Your Hearing*.

20 4 preachers. Read Childers, *Performing the Word*, pp. 15 – 56.
Oral/written chart handout.

27 4 preachers. Read Childers, pp. 57 – 98.

Oct. 4 3 preachers. Read Clader, *Voicing the Vision*, pp. 1-43.

Second preaching assignment: Next Sunday's lections.

11 4 preachers. Read Clader, pp. 44-83. Lowry's loop handout.

18 4 preachers. Read Clader, pp. 84-115.

25 **READING WEEK—NO CLASS.** Read Clader, pp. 116-165.

Nov. 1 4 preachers. Read Taylor, *The Preaching Life*, pp. 3 – 50.

8 3 preachers. Read Taylor, pp. 51 – 86. Micah on preaching on people.

15 15 preachers. Read Campbell, pp. 1 - 67.

Third preaching assignment: to be negotiated.

22 4 preachers. Read Campbell, pp. 68 - 104.

29 4 preachers. Read Campbell, pp. 105 - 156.

Dec. 6 4 preachers. Read. Campbell, pp. 157 – 188.

13 3 preachers.

16 **All written assignments—including final self-evaluation--to be handed in by 5:00.**