

2.1.1.2.3 MASTER OF DIVINITY COMPETENCY EXAMINATIONS

(Theological Seminary – Department of Pastoral Theology) *last updated on June 26, 2019*

A comprehensive examination of seminarians' learning about Homiletics responds, in part, to stated outcomes for the Department of Pastoral Theology, namely,

- that “the student will develop an understanding of the history, purpose, process and context of pastoral ministry and the use of the principles of pastoral care” and
- that “the student will develop and practice skills for celebrating, proclaiming, preaching, teaching, evangelizing, listening, guiding and reconciling in the multi-cultural Catholic Christian community.”

To this end, the Master of Divinity programs examines the seminarians' competency in the field of Homiletics by way of oral and written tests based on the following:

Sources:

Documents of the Second Vatican Council

- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), n. 35
- *Dei Verbum* (1965), n. 24
- *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (1965), n. 4

Code of Canon Law (1983), canons 762-772.

Papal Documents

- John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (1990)
- Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* (2010)
- Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013)

Congregation for the Clergy

- *The Priest and the Third Christian Millennium* (1999)

Congregation on Divine Worship

- *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, third typical edition (2002)
- *The Homiletic Directory* (2014)

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

- *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* (1982)
- *Preaching the Mystery of Faith* (2012)

ORAL Examination – Study Guide

1. Summarize the biblical foundations for the Church's preaching mystery, with particular reference to the distinct missions of Jesus and the Apostles, and how both impact the work of preachers today.
2. Offer a summary review of the history of homiletics, up to and including the magisterium of Pope Francis, with reference to important themes and areas of emphasis.
3. Define what a homily is, with particular reference to the proclamation of the Word (Scripture and Tradition) in the distinctive context/setting of the Church's worship (Mass and Sacraments).
4. In terms of preparation, explain the importance of structure with regard to the major elements of liturgical preaching and briefly describe one or more of the basic structures used to communicate those elements.
5. In terms of delivery, explain the role and function of imagery, language, and tone as these pertain to what one should and should not do in preaching a homily.
6. Explain the significance of the Word proclaimed for the preacher himself, with particular reference to the personal life/witness and the ecclesial duty/responsibility of priests.

WRITTEN Examination - Questions

1. Briefly explain what a homily is and distinguish it from other forms of religious instruction (e.g. sermon, exegesis, catechesis, witness).
2. Based on *Preaching the Mystery of Faith* (part III), briefly explain each of the four personal characteristics of the one ordained to preach, as "a man of ..."
 - (a) Holiness
 - (b) Scripture
 - (c) Tradition
 - (d) Communion
3. Based on *Evangelii Gaudium* (nn. 145-159), briefly explain what Pope Francis means by these three necessary elements in the preparation of a homily:
 - (a) reverence for truth
 - (b) personalizing the word
 - (c) an ear to the people
4. Based on the *Homiletic Directory* (nn. 9-15), in its reference to the *Introduction to the Lectionary* (n. 24), briefly explain the dynamic shape of a homily in terms of the three liturgical "movements" at Mass:
 - (a) proclaiming the Paschal mystery ...
 - (b) making it (the Paschal mystery) present through the Eucharist ...
 - (c) and carrying the Gospel into the world in daily life.
