

2.2.2 HOMILETICS & THE DIMENSIONS OF FORMATION

(School of Diaconal Formation)

last updated on June 26, 2019

Developing the Spiritual Dimension in Homiletics

The spiritual dimension is formed in the soul through prayer. Prayer helps us be open in mind, heart and soul to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit, the great gift sent by God as Jesus says: 'Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened.' Praying with the scriptures, *Lectio Divina*, is a way of prayer that can be done in preparation for preaching. Listening to the words and imagining the action in a gospel leads to reflection, to hearing Jesus speak to the listener in a way that is unique for him and imparts a message that is both timeless and timely, a message that converts the listener and leads him to a conversation with Jesus. This is prayer that should be developed and shaped not only in Homiletics but also through discussions with the candidate's spiritual director.

Developing the Human Dimension in Homiletics

The human dimension is formed through living bodily in the world. The candidate's family and work life, his interaction with all kinds of people in all kinds of situations and places shows him how the gospel is to be lived. The gospel came from Jesus' interaction with people of all kinds and in all places and the candidate reflects on how his own life can be more joy-filled by living out the gospel message. By careful consideration of the society and situations in which he lives and communicates with others, the candidate can see excellent examples of how the gospel can be opened up to the faithful in the homily.

Developing the Intellectual Dimension in Homiletics

The intellectual dimension is formed in the mind, primarily in situations in which the candidate is exposed to ideas and theories by attending Formation classes, by reading assigned texts, by writing reflection papers and by discussions with his mentor and spiritual director on topics of faith and morals. Shaping the candidate into an effective preacher requires that he know and can access a reserve of knowledge spanning catechesis, exegesis, history and hermeneutics, rhetorical and oratorical skills, among others and apply that knowledge to the crafting and preaching of a homily. Particular attention to the history of preaching, the types of homilies, the methods for accessing the gospel message, Church documents from synods and councils, Patristic literature and other matters will form the focus of the introductory course in Homiletics, leading to and supporting the practica in subsequent semesters.

Developing the Pastoral Dimension in Homiletics

Whereas the spiritual dimension is formed in his soul, the intellectual dimension in his mind and the human dimension through the fruits of his bodily efforts at work and in the family, the pastoral dimension is formed through the candidate's heart. During his Formation, he would have had the opportunity to see the needs and wants of the parish faithful, or of those limited by illnesses, lack of faithful practices, incomplete or improper knowledge of the faith, and those suffering from the effects of their spiritual weaknesses. This can occur in both the parish and domestic churches, at work, in social occasions. He develops an openness to all kinds of people and sees their desire for repentance, reconciliation, restoration and resurrection to new life in the Spirit through all these observations and interactions. He learns how to speak with, pray with and

comfort those in afflictions and therefore, can apply the gospel in a loving and healing manner in his homilies. He learns that mercy and not judgement is the better way and that here is his best chance to be a minister of charity by becoming a minister of the word and altar.
