

2.2.5 DRAFTS FOR INSTRUCTORS

2.2.5.1 ELEMENTS OF A SYLLABUS FOR HOMILETICS PRACTICUM

(School of Diaconal Formation)

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Basic Premise

The following preaching standards involve specific skills in specific circumstances that the instructor must teach and assess. Each specific skill increases in complexity and in depth, as the type of homily in the specific liturgy demands. The basic premise is that practicum homilies should start with the simpler, and grow to the more complex, skills by narrowing the focus of the homily to specific Masses and Lectionary readings.

Preaching Standards

The student preacher should know how and be able to

1. Pray with the Scriptures as in Lectio Divina, applying this to the readings for the Sunday, solemnity, feast, memorial, liturgical, sacramental, or seasonal weekday Mass for which he will preach.
2. Determine a theme or main message, from among several possible ones that are doctrinally correct, in the gospel
3. Introduce the homily with an appropriate opening that either summarizes the critical events, uses a story, or relates a current situation in the local culture that can lead into the declaration of the main message or theme of the gospel
4. Develop that theme with support from scriptural exegesis as needed and appropriate
5. Express and explain doctrinal and catechetical concepts appropriate to the gospel at hand in the development of the homily theme
6. Direct the homily theme to actions of the Mass as appropriate
7. Show how the gospel message might be still at work through Christ in the world, the community, and the Church today
8. Express and develop the theme of the gospel as “Good News” that gives hope, joy, and peace to the listening faithful at Mass
9. Close the homily appropriately, aiming at having the listening faithful reflect, meditate, respond in prayer, and contemplate on the message

Method for Demonstrating Standard Proficiency

The student preacher will

1. Prepare and deliver, with or without a written text, a “one-point” homily as a practicum exercise (that is, one that is delivered in the classroom or in a church setting to an audience of classmates, guests, and teachers, and that is assessed and critiqued using valid and reliable instruments)
2. Prepare a practicum homily that is of appropriate length for the existing culture and community tolerance, and that emphasizes one message or theme point throughout, so that the homily leads the faithful to listen and respond with attention and anticipation
3. Deliver that practicum homily with rhetorical skills that include proper grammar and syntax, appropriate vocabulary, accurate pronunciation, and proper speech patterns
4. Deliver that practicum homily in a manner that allows the audience to hear and see him clearly, with appropriate gestures, eye contact, and facial expressions
5. Exhibit genuineness, accurate content (avoid heresy and scandal), emotional acuity, and appropriate awareness of culture and events in the community

Method for Critique of the Practicum Homilies and Assessment of the Student Preacher

The student preacher will

1. Deliver the assigned practicum homily on the date of the class as determined and assigned by his teacher
2. Deliver the assigned practicum homily in a setting designed by the teacher: the student’s local parish church or another appropriate classroom setting
3. Deliver the assigned practicum homily to his fellow students in formation and to others in attendance: other parishioners invited to participate in the critique, spouses and children, other teachers, and clergy
4. Listen to and apply the critiques that this teacher and fellow students and other attendees give him, aiming at constant improvement by applying them systematically over the length of the semester. Those critiques are based on the four main elements of a homily: message/content, effectiveness, presence, and delivery.
5. Pass the semester and year through receiving a numerical grade that is determined by the teacher who will use the instruments the School of Diaconal Formation has accepted
6. Become informed of his progress through the semester by viewing and discussing a Progress Log prepared by his teacher. That Log contains assessment statements and suggests for improvement.