

The Word on the Web

Online Preaching Resources

Gregory Heille, O.P.

The author, a leading voice in homiletics education, offers preachers a survey of resources currently available online and several helpful suggestions to accompany their use.

No question about it, the world wide web is a boon to preachers—and perhaps especially to busy preachers on a budget. The challenge is finding sites that serve biblical interpretation, congregational and cultural analysis, and interaction with other preachers—without giving over to canned sermons or other (sometimes expensive) quick fixes. The following annotated list of preaching websites is by no means exhaustive. Yet, it can help serious preachers to sample several available resources and bookmark a few tried and true study resources on their computer.

A few tips for preaching preparation with the use of these resources could be the following:

- Print out the lectionary texts, using one of the sites for the Catholic or the Revised Common Lectionary below.
- Before consulting printed or online Bible commentaries, take contemplative time to encounter the text in prayer and meditation. An excellent approach to this step, which can be done either individually or communally, is *Lectio Divina*.

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A website is offered below to introduce you to this ancient contemplative practice of meditating on the Word.

- Once you have prayerfully encountered the Word on your own terms, look for web resources that expose you to a range of biblical interpretations of the texts. Resources that offer a social-scientific study of the world behind the biblical texts, as well as resources exploring the social-cultural world in which we live in front of the texts, can be particularly helpful.
- Let your web study support and expand your contemplative insights and sense of direction. As you prepare to preach, remember you are not giving a Bible lecture or some stranger's sermon or interpretation of the texts—you are letting the text reveal itself in your pastoral dialogue with your people as Good News and Word of God.
- Be humble, and don't be afraid to talk about difficult subjects, and seek feedback from your people so that you can improve as a preacher.
- Remember, too, to keep an eye open for those few printed commentaries or resources that you might want to acquire for your personal library. More and more wonderful resources are being made available in biblical studies. There are also many wonderful books on preaching. Some of the best publishers in preaching are Abingdon, Chalice, Continuum, Eerdmans, Fortress, Liturgical, and Westminster John Knox.

I extend my thanks to the fall term 2002 Advanced Preaching Class of Aquinas Institute of Theology who did the groundwork in compiling and annotating this list of websites which I have further edited here. By name, they are: Scott Daniels, O.P., Marcelo de Jesumaria, C.R., Linda Flynn (E.L.C.A.), Stephen M. Gira, C.R., Jose K. Jacob, S.M.M., Charles Johnson, O.P., Deacon Allen Love, Roberto Merced, O.P., Linda Noe, O.P., and John Dominic Sims, O.P.

Direct online hyperlinks to most of the resources given here can be found at www.op.org/domcentral/preach/OnlineResources.htm.

Categories

- Bible
- Catholic Lectionary—General
- Catholic Lectionary—Justice
- Catholic Lectionary—Spanish and English/Spanish
- Ecumenical and Revised Common Lectionary—English and Spanish
- Organizations and Publications

Bible

Bible Gateway (www.biblegateway.com)

The site offers an extensive biblical passage and word search engine of all major English language translations, as well as full search capability in twenty-seven other languages.

Basic Preaching Resources (www.pitts.emory.edu/theotech/preachinglite.html)

Timothy C. Tucker offers an extensive gateway of bible links and links for preaching, including The Text This Week, Revised Common Lectionary, Online Bibles, Bible Study Tools, Five Gospel Parallels, Greek and Hebrew Fonts, The New Testament Gateway, Bible Commentary Articles, Resource Pages for Biblical Studies, and Worship and Liturgy Links.

Biblical Studies on the Web (www.bsw.org)

This page originates in Rome and is intended to provide the academic world with a research instrument for exegetical and hermeneutical studies. Various scholars provide exegesis of many Hebrew and Christian Scripture passages. The site also includes historical and archeological information, as well as articles on biblical theology, biblical themes, and character studies.

Electronic New Testament Educational Resources

(<http://clawwww.lmu.edu/faculty/fjust/bible.htm>)

Professor Felix Just, S.J., of Loyola Marymount University provides an outline and analysis of New Testament and related themes, with some cross-references and New Testament/Old Testament parallels. The site includes biblical word and subject search and links to other online Scripture resources.

Lectio Divina (www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html)

Contemplative reading of biblical texts using the Benedictine practice of *Lectio Divina* is an excellent beginning step for any preaching preparation. An introduction to *Lectio* is presented by Fr. Luke Dysinger, O.S.B., of Valyermo Abbey in California. The method presented here can be used individually or in a Bible study or preaching preparation group.

New American Bible and Catholic Lectionary (www.usccb.org/nab/index.htm)

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops homepage offers the full text of the New American Bible, as well as the Roman Catholic Lectionary texts for weekdays and Sundays.

Catholic Lectionary—General

Andrew M. Greeley Homilies (www.agreeley.com/homilies.html)

Each Sunday includes background and a story. The archive goes back to 1995.

Athenaeum of Ohio: Pastoral Preaching Website

(www.mtsm.org/defaultpreach.htm)

Weekly exegesis and a sample homily are given for the Sundays of the Catholic Lectionary. Archives of past Sundays also are included. A wide variety of preachers and pastoral settings are featured in the preaching. Each month a feature article on preaching is also posted.

Blauvelt Dominican Sisters (www.opblauvelt.org/scripture.html)

Brief reflections on the Sunday Scriptures are posted by the Blauvelt (New York) Dominican Sisters.

Catholic Homilies (www.homilies.com)

Web links connect the reader to a number of sample Sunday and weekday Catholic homilies. The page—part of the internet ministry of Fr. Nicholas J. O'Brien, Leesburg, Florida—also includes links to homiletic resources and other reflection and exegesis sites, as well as illustrations and stories that can be used in preaching.

Catholic Lectionary Homilies and Ideas

(<http://members.aol.com/homilies/yearaord.html>)

Preaching reflections for each Sunday of the three-year cycle are posted by Fr. Jim Mazzone of Worcester, Massachusetts, and are indexed by liturgical year, scriptural citation, themes, and holy days and feasts.

Center for Liturgy at St. Louis University (www.liturgy.slu.edu)

This resource is a comprehensive site designed for use by all members of the assembly in preparation for the Sunday liturgy. Site includes prayers in preparation for Scripture reflection, reflections on the spirituality of the Sunday Mass, commentary on the readings including historical/cultural context and thoughts from early church writers, music ideas, and additional annotated links.

Creighton University Daily Reflection

(www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/daily.html)

These reflections on the daily and Sunday readings are sponsored by the Collaborative Ministry Office of Creighton University and prepared by members of the university faculty and staff, lay and ordained.

Deacon Sil's Homiletic Resource Center (www.deaconsil.com)

This page is designed by a Roman Catholic deacon with the hope that it could be a one-stop resource page for preachers of the Word of all denominations. Resources are listed according to the various texts of the day for either the Revised Common, Roman Catholic or Episcopal lectionaries. After a free thirty-day trial period, there is a \$40 annual membership fee.

Doing as Jesus Commands (www.ake.quik.co.nz/termon)

This New Zealand site offers short background information on the three readings of the Sunday Liturgy. It has a reflection section at the end. Sections address comments, ideas, prayers, analysis, imagery, liturgy resources, justice issues, society and culture, economics, and the world.

Homilies (www.frtommylane.com/homilies.htm)

Fr. Tommy Lane of the Diocese of Cloyne, Ireland, offers homilies for the current liturgical year and other years in the liturgical cycle. He also offers homilies for feast days, Holy Week, Triduum, and thematic homilies.

New American Bible and Catholic Lectionary (www.usccb.org/nab)

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops homepage offers the full text of the New American Bible, as well as the Roman Catholic Lectionary texts for weekdays and Sundays.

Preachers' Exchange

(www.opsouth.org/opsite/preach/preachex/Index.htm,
www.op.org/exchange/default.htm)

This site, also available by free e-mail subscription, provides diverse spiritual reflections, insights, and quotations, for preaching from a Catholic perspective with a social justice and ecumenical focus.

"First Impressions: Sunday Scripture Reflections" by Jude Siciliano, O.P., the Promoter of Preaching of the Dominican Southern Province, provides thoughts and impressions on upcoming Sunday lectionary readings.

"*Homilias Dominicales*" provides Spanish-language reflections on Sunday lectionary readings by Dominican friars of the Southern Dominican Province (not a translation of "First Impressions").

"First Impressions: Volume Two" offers contributions and reflections made by subscribers to Preachers' Exchange—ordained, religious, and lay—providing a diverse source of insights and some exegetical information.

"Preachers' Exchange Articles" offers a listing of articles on the Sunday readings.

Preaching (<http://torch.op.org/preaching>)

A homily for the upcoming Sunday is posted in advance. Archives date back to 1999 and are indexed by date and liturgical cycle. This site is put together by the English Dominican Province and is available also by e-mail service.

Proclaiming the Word (www.monksonline.org/homilies.htm)

This is the web site of the Cistercian Monks of Our Lady of Spring Bank, Sparta, Wisconsin, offering an archive of homilies dating back to 1999.

Reflecting on Sunday's Readings

(<http://emmausjourney.org/resource/reflect.shtml>)

Intended for small group discussions, each reflection on the Sunday readings provides an introductory reflection on some aspect of the readings or on personal spirituality. The page is hosted by Emmaus Journey, a Catholic small group Bible discussion series.

Sánchez Archives (www.ncrpub.com)

This online archive of commentaries on the Roman Lectionary was composed by Patricia Datchuck Sánchez and previously published in the homiletic section of *Celebration*. These commentaries provide a scholarly but accessible study of the Scriptures assigned to all Sundays and most major feasts for Years A, B, and C. The archive can be searched by year, season, or specific Sunday.

Sunday's Gospel Reflections (www.donghanh.org/~suyniem/reflection)

This site gives the full text of the Gospel, followed by Interesting Details, One Main Point, and Reflections. Reflections on daily readings are available by subscription.

Catholic Lectionary—Justice

Center for Concern: Sunday Reflections

(www.coc.org/focus/ej/reflections.html)

Edited by Fr. John Bucki, S.J., the site relates Sunday texts to Catholic Social Teaching.

Peace Connections (www.garlitz.org/scripture.htm)

Thomas L. Garlitz, Director of the Peace and Social Justice Ministry of the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois, gives weekly reflections correlating the Sunday readings to issues of peace and justice.

Peace Pulpit (<http://nationalcatholicreporter.org/peace>)

This weekly service of the *National Catholic Reporter* gives weekly Sunday homilies of Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton at St. Leo's Church in Detroit, Michigan, and is also available as an e-mail service.

Catholic Lectionary—Spanish and Spanish/English

Catholic Homilies/Homilias Catolicas (www.homilies.net)

This site, fully bilingual in English and Spanish, provides a table for the complete current liturgical year and many useful links.

Cyberfaith (www.cyberfaith.com/index_sp.htm, www.cyberfaith.com)

The Sadlier Publishing Company site gives English and Spanish reflections especially for youth through its “Proclaiming the Faith” link. This site could be especially useful to the preacher involved in parochial youth ministry which may include a Sunday Youth Mass.

Homilias Dominicales

(www.opsouth.org/opsite/preach/preachex/Index.htm,
www.op.org/exchange/default.htm)

This service of “Preachers’ Exchange” provides Spanish-language reflections on Sunday lectionary readings by Dominican friars of the Southern Dominican Province.

Homilies Alive (www.homiliesalive.com)

Homilies Alive offers two homilies in English and one in Spanish for the next four Sundays. This site also provides Spanish homilies for special occasions, such as funerals and weddings. The archive of this site goes back to the year 2000, with contributions from several priests and permanent deacons.

Krysallis (www.krysallis.com)

This site, which gives homilies in English and Spanish, is based on liberation theology and proposes “liberation preaching” as an expression of the prophetic nature of ministry.

Predicacion (www.dominicos.org/predicar/predicacion/default.htm)

This Spanish language site of the Dominican friars in Spain includes *La Palabra, día a día* (The daily Word), commentaries on the Sacred Scriptures, homilies, links to other web sites, preaching resources for children’s homilies, and prayers.

Servicio Bíblico Latinamericano (<http://servicioskoinonia.org>)

Emphasis is placed on community action and social justice in the context of Latin America. In addition to exegesis of the Gospel, this Brazilian site suggests points for reflection at the personal as well as community levels. It also gives suggestions for the prayers of the faithful. The site is given in English, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Ecumenical and Revised Common Lectionary —English and Spanish

El Instituto Cristiano de Recursos/Christian Resource Institute

(www.cresourcei.org/Spanish/bible_S.html, www.cresourcei.org/sunbib.html)

This Spanish/English resource page provides resources for those intending to preach the Revised Common Lectionary in Spanish. The site contains links such as Frequently Asked Questions about Scripture, Biblical Theol-

ogy, and Scripture in the Church, History and Culture, the Context of Scripture, Sunday and Daily Gospel readings, and other resources.

Comments: Commentaries on the Revised Common Lectionary

(www.montreal.anglican.org/comment)

The Anglican Diocese of Montreal offers weekly readings from the Bible along with brief explanatory comments and background materials on the biblical books.

Desperate Preacher's Site (www.desperatepreacher.com)

This subscription site posts lectionary resources four weeks in advance.

Exchange for Worship and Sermon Ideas

(www.vsg.cape.com/~dougshow/second-site/index.html)

This website of Rev. Dr. Douglas K. Showalter of the United Church of Christ is a page for exchanging and sharing ideas, experiences, and readings on sermons, preaching, and worship with other preachers.

Homiletics Online (www.homileticsonline.com)

This is the subscription online service of *Homiletics* magazine

Kids' Sermons (www.kiskipby.org/children/childser.htm)

This site for preaching with children is provided by the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas of rural Western Pennsylvania.

Lectionary Bible Studies and Sermons (www.lectionarystudies.com)

Bible studies and sermons are given for the Revised Common Lectionary, along with studies on theology, liturgy, and the Anglican Church. Discussion questions are also provided.

Lectionary Resources

(<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/lectionaryindex.html>)

Professor Bill Loader of the Uniting Church of Australia offers first thoughts on different passages from the Gospels in the Lectionary. These are not exegetical commentaries, although they include exegetical observations.

Living Web Lectionary Project (www.livingweb.com/lectionary)

This gathering of online Lectionary materials includes lectionaries themselves (Revised Common, Catholic, Episcopal, Orthodox, Coptic, Armenian, East Syrian, and others), commentaries, discussion groups, and other resources related to understanding or preaching the Lectionary.

McGregor Page Preaching the Lectionary and Children's Sermons

(www.webspawner.com/users/mcgregorpage,

www.webspawner.com/users/childpage)

Also available by e-mail service, this page is dedicated to homilies for young adults and children. The homilies are short, amusing, direct, and applicable. The adult page is insightful.

Mennolink: Preaching and Teaching Resources

(<http://pastors.mennolink.org/preaching.html>)

This Mennonite preaching page includes Bibles, translations, commentaries, and other helps.

Pastor's Pointers (www.mumac.org/ppcss.html)

This is a page of sermon, worship, and bible links of the Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in Minnesota.

S.A.M.U.E.L. (www.ucc.org/worship/samuel)

The United Church of Christ offers this comprehensive resource site for worship, Bible study, and sermon preparation.

Sermon Central (www.sermoncentral.com)

This page boasts 55,000 free sermons, accessible by category, scripture, key word, topic, audience age, contributor, and denomination.

Sermon Writer: Sermon Resources for Lectionary Preaching

(www.sermonwriter.com)

This subscription site, which may be explored by guests, gives exegesis, sermons, true stories, thought provokers, and hymns.

Sermons and Sermon-Lectionary Resources

(www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermon.html)

This extensive collection by Rev. Richard Fairchild (United Church of Canada) includes year A, B, C, Easter, Christmas, Seasonal, Special occasions, etc., and is based on the Revised Common Lectionary. The site also includes children's stories, hymns, journals, and more.

The Text This Week (www.textweek.com)

This ecumenical page includes links and general resources for each Sunday of the Revised Common Lectionary, including stories, movie connections, artwork, and reflections and questions to enhance prayer and study.

Organizations and Publications

Aquinas Institute of Theology (www.ai.edu)

Aquinas Institute of Theology, Saint Louis, Missouri, offers a summer Preaching Institute, a Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry in Preaching, and a Doctor of Ministry in Preaching.

Catholic Association of Teachers of Homiletics (CATH)

(www.cathomiletics.org)

This homepage has a page of links to preaching resources.

Catholic Coalition on Preaching (CCOP) (www.preachingcoalition.org)

The Catholic Coalition on Preaching is a twenty-one member organization supporting a renewal of preaching in the Catholic Church in the United States.

Catholic News Service (www.catholicnews.com)

Though not a preaching resource, this service carries news pertaining to the Catholic Church and world at large, with links to Catholic resources.

Celebration (www.ncrpub.com)

Celebration is a set of resources for preaching and liturgy preparation, mailed by the *National Catholic Reporter* for \$65 per year. Preaching notes are written by Patricia Datchuck Sánchez. A sample issue can be viewed online.

College of Preachers (www.collegeofpreachers.org)

The College of Preachers is an Episcopalian institution for continuing formation in preaching, based at the Washington National Cathedral.

Dominican Central (www.op.org/DomCentral/default.htm)

The homepage of the Dominican Central Province is a major Dominican gateway that includes many preaching resources and links.

Dominican High Schools Preaching Conference

(www.op.org/opteens/default.htm)

Information is given about the annual Dominican High School Preaching Conference.

Fulfilled in Your Hearing: the Homily in the Sunday Assembly

(www.usccb.org/plm/fiyh.htm)

Issued by the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry in 1982, *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* represents a major contribution by the United States Bishops on preaching and preaching preparation. The document is now available online in Adobe Acrobat format.

Homiletic and Pastoral Review

(www.catholic.net/rcc/periodicals/homiletic/index2.html)

This online version of the Jesuit periodical offers many online articles going back to 1996 and is a resource for liberation, feminist, narrative, or social scientific hermeneutics.

Homiletics: A Guide to Resources in Mount Angel Abbey Library

(www.mtangel.edu/library/main/homiletics.htm)

Several resources are listed.

John Paul II (www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/index.htm)

The Pope's homilies are posted at the Vatican homepage.

Lectionary Homiletics (www.lectionary.com)

This is the homepage of Lectionary Homiletics magazine.

Living Pulpit (www.pulpit.org)

This online quarterly journal focuses thematically on issues in preaching. Past topics have included Hope, Faith, Love, Evil, Justice, Prayer, Anger, Jesus, Forgiving, Conflict, Community, Grace, Suffering, Life, Christmas, and Holy Spirit.

National Institute for the Word of God (www.wordofgodinstitute.org)

The National Institute for the Word of God, founded by Eastern Province Dominican John Burke, O.P., conducts programs in preaching, liturgy, catechetics, Bible sharing, lector training, parish renewal, and research.

Partners in Preaching (<http://partnersinpreaching.org>)

Partners in Preaching is a national ministry of consultation, training, and formation for the Church's ministry of liturgical preaching. The vision of Partners in Preaching is that every local faith community would have competent, diverse, and empowered ordained and lay voices for ritual preaching.

Preacher's Library for Biblical Interpretation

(www.op.org/domcentral/preach/biblibrary.htm)

Twenty volumes are recommended for consideration by Gregory Heille, O.P., of Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, in consultation with Aquinas Institute Advanced Preaching students.

Preaching the Just Word

(www.georgetown.edu/centers/woodstock/pjw.htm)

Preaching the Just Word is a national program of the Woodstock Theological Center, conceived by Walter J. Burghardt, S.J., and coordinated by both Fr. Burghardt and Fr. Raymond B. Kemp.

Wabash Center Internet Guide: Preaching

(www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/preach.htm)

This ecumenical compilation of links by the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion is divided into the following categories: Syllabi and Teaching Resources, Electronic Texts, Electronic Journals, Web Sites, Bibliographies, and Listserv Discussion Groups.