



TOWARD A MORE EFFECTIVE HOMILY

OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

The homily is described in the following way by the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, number 65:

The homily is part of the Liturgy and is strongly recommended, for it is necessary for the nurturing of the Christian life. It should be an exposition of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Ordinary or from the Proper of the Mass of the day, and take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners.

The Bishop, priest and deacon, who preach during the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy, are assisted with their own serious preparation for this task when helpful feedback is provided on their homilies. The following questions are based on how the Church describes the homily in the paragraph above and responses to them can assist the preacher on the way toward a more effective homily.

1. As part of the Liturgy, the homily has a role in helping the listener glorify God and share in God's holiness. Did the homily you just heard lead you to greater praise of God?
2. One of the ways the homily leads the listener to share in God's holiness, God's life within us, is to encourage the living of the Christian life. Did the homily you just heard encourage you to be more attentive and faithful in living the Christian life?
3. The homily has as one of its chief sources the biblical texts that precede it. Did the homily you just heard open up the Sacred Scriptures with new and deeper meaning?
4. The homily also has as one of its sources the liturgical occasion and the prayers of the Mass. Did the homily you just heard help you to relate the word of God with the Time of the Church Year or the feast being celebrated?
5. The homily also is to explain the mystery of Christ announced in the word of God and lead to the same mystery of Christ realized in the Sacrament, for example in the Holy Eucharist. Did the homily you just heard lead you to more fully participate and receive the Sacrament?
6. The homily is for the listener. Did the homily you just heard engage you?