

CATECHESIS #19

July 14, 2019

What is the purpose of the Homily?

Having learned of the importance of the Scripture readings, in particular, the Gospel, it is the role of the priest to help us understand them. The Scriptures are not just good, moralistic stories from the past but are the living and active Word of God. They are current and applicable even to our 21st century lives. The priest is to help us recognize this. In the Homily, or Sermon, it's the priest's responsibility to assist us, the laity, to understand Scripture and how to apply it to our life.

We are the people of the Good News and it is imperative that we understand it. By nature of our baptism, we are commissioned by Christ to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." (Mk 16:15) The Pope, the Bishops, the priests do not go into our work places, offices, schools and markets. We do. It is OUR duty to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. WE are the bearers of the Good News and we must proclaim it by our words, actions and deeds every day and every where to everyone. To do this effectively, we must know Scripture and understand how it relates to our modern world.

When we hear Scripture at Mass on Sunday, we must pay careful attention to learn well so we can effectively share this Good News of Salvation. We may not remember everything we hear but we can focus on one point and continue reflecting on it throughout the week, sharing it with others.

We must always support, love and pray for all our priests. Not all priests are gifted homilists and we should not judge the quality of the Mass by the homily. In the Mass, Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection are made present to us and we are given the unfathomable gift of participating in it. We cannot let Satan distract us from this ultimate reality by allowing ourselves to be critics of our priest or the "quality" of Mass. No matter how gifted or poor the Lord's minister may be, he is the priest the Lord has chosen for us at this time, in this place and Jesus will use him to speak to us if we listen.

Priests, the proclaimers of the gospel, are ever coming and going out of history, but the same Eternal Word is always and everywhere proclaimed. Just as the ancient Jews heard the voice of Christ proclaim the Gospel in the hills of Galilee, so we too hear the same message, ancient and yet ever new, being made present again to our ears through our priest, who, through his priesthood, is one with Christ. Let us never speak badly of our priests for in doing so we speak of Christ as Scripture says: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." (Rom 15:3)