
ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
at Western University
Fall 2015

HOMILETICS 5471A
Theology of Proclamation
Tuesdays 7:00 p.m. to 8:50 pm
St. Peter's Seminary, Room 102

Professor: Father J. Comiskey
519-433-0658, ext. 275 or jcomiske@uwo.ca
Office hours by appointment

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the theology of the proclaimed word, with an emphasis on the knowledge and skills needed to preach in a liturgical context.

B. GOALS

The course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

KNOWLEDGE

1. To understand the place and importance of preaching within the life of the Church.
2. To grasp the nature and function of the liturgical homily.
3. To know how to prepare a liturgical homily, and where to find resources to assist in this task.
4. To have a familiarity with the structure of the *Lectionary*, and how that structure affects the task of preaching.

SKILLS

1. To be able to prepare and deliver an effective homily in various liturgical contexts such as the Sunday and daily Mass, weddings, and funerals.
2. To apply knowledge of the structure of the *Lectionary* in the context of the liturgical year.
3. To apply biblical knowledge and theology to the art of preaching.

ATTITUDES

1. Appreciation of the significance of the homily within the liturgical context.
2. A deep love for the gift of the call to liturgical preaching.
3. A commitment to life-long learning in Sacred Scripture and preaching.

4. The importance of prayer as the basis for all preaching.

C. ASSESSMENT

I Required Reading: (1) articles provided in the “course pack” obtained from the bookstore; (2) Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacrament, *Homiletic Directory*, Ottawa: CCCB Publications, 2015; (3) additional reading as indicated below; (3) other readings that may be assigned by the professor.

II Essay (20% of final mark)

Drawing from the readings assigned, each student will present a five-page paper on the topic “What is a liturgical homily?” This paper is due **13 October**.

III Critique of a Sunday homily you hear sometime during the semester (20% of the final mark)

Each student will provide a three-page critique of a Sunday homily he hears in a parish setting. (The homilist will remain anonymous!) Provide the liturgical date and readings, and explain how the homily reflected the principles you have learned in this course. This is due **17 November**.

IV A written Sunday homily (40% of final mark)

Each student will be assigned a set of Sunday readings for this assignment. The written homily must be accompanied by a one-page log describing the process used in the construction of the homily. This is due **24 November**.

All of the above assignments will be double-spaced, in 12 point font, Times New Roman or its equivalent.

V Oral exam on the whole course (20% of final mark) on the day set in the December schedule.

D. COURSE OUTLINE

Part 1: Introduction to the Course

- purpose of the course
- course requirements

Part 2: Proclamation – The Church’s Mission

- the Church’s mandate
- the bishop’s mandate
- the priest’s mandate
- the deacon’s mandate
- the mandate of the laity

Reading: (1) The Mandate to Preach from Vatican II; (2) Section II, Teachers of the

Word, in Congregation for the Clergy, Circular Letter, *The Priest: Teacher of the Word, Minister of the Sacraments, Leader of the Community*, 1999.

Part 3: The Church's Legislation on Preaching

- selected articles from the *Code of Canon Law* (handout)

Part 4: A Theology of Liturgical Preaching

- theological reflection on the nature of the act of preaching

Readings: articles 1 to 4 from the course pack; and Section III, The Homily, in National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly*, USCCB, Office of Publishing Services, Washington, 1982.

Part 5: Images of the Homilist

- the Herald
- the Teacher
- the Interpreter
- the Witness

Reading: Section II, The Preacher, from *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*

Part 6: The History of Preaching

Reading: article 5 from the course pack

Part 7: The Listener

Readings: Section I, The Assembly, from *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*; article 6 from the course pack

Part 8: The Lectionary

- ecclesial statements
- structure of the *Lectionary*
- choice of readings – options for the homilist

Reading: article 7 from the course pack

Part 9: Preparing a Homily

- an 11-step process for writing a homily
- introductions to a homily
- conclusions to a homily

Readings: articles 8 to 11 from the course pack; Section IV, Homiletic Method, from *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*

Part 10: The Delivery of the Homily

- dealing with nervousness
- delivery style
- preaching location
- audio/visuals?
- dialogue homilies?

Part 11: Special Applications

- the Funeral Homily (*Reading*: article 12 from the course pack)
- the Wedding Homily
- preaching to Children
- preaching and Moral Concerns

Part 12: The *Homiletic Directory*: a review of the course and direction for the future

E. POLICIES REGARDING SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

I Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates as given above. Assignments may NOT be submitted electronically.

II It is the responsibility of the student to organize his work so that the assignments are completed on time. For a serious reason, a student may approach the professor before the due-date, and may be granted an extension at the discretion of the professor. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission of the professor.

F. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC OFFENCES

I The following is the policy of the Senate of Western University and of King's:
Scholastic offences (i.e. plagiarism and other forms of cheating) are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a scholastic offence, at the following website:
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

II Checking for Plagiarism:

Required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to Western for this purpose. Submitted papers will be included as source documents in the reference database for future similar purpose. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement between Western and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

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