

LITURGYNOTES – FOR APRIL 2015

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NEWS FROM THE HOLY SEE: EXTRAORDINARY HOLY YEAR – JUBILEE OF MERCY (Press Release from the Vatican)

In St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis announced on March 13, 2015, the celebration of an "extraordinary Holy Year". This "Jubilee of Mercy" will commence with the opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter's on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, 2015, and will conclude on November 20, 2016 with the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. At the start of the new year, the Holy Father had stated: "This is the time of mercy. It is important that the lay faithful live it and bring it into different social environments. Go forth!"

The Jubilee announcement was made on the second anniversary of the election of Pope Francis, during his homily for the penitential liturgy with which the Holy Father opened the "24 Hours for the Lord". This initiative, proposed by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, promotes throughout the world the opening of churches for an extended period of time for the purpose of inviting people to the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The theme for this year has been taken from the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians, "God rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4).

The opening of this next Jubilee will take place on the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council in 1965. This is of great significance, for it impels the Church to continue the work begun at Vatican II.

During the Jubilee, the Sunday readings for Ordinary Time will be taken from the Gospel of Luke, the one referred to as "the evangelist of mercy". Dante Alighieri describes him as "*scriba mansuetudinis Christi*", "narrator of the meekness of Christ". There are many well-known parables of mercy presented in the Gospel of Luke: the lost sheep, the lost coin, the merciful father.

The official and solemn announcement of the Holy Year will take place with the public proclamation of the *Bolla* in front of the Holy Door on Divine Mercy Sunday, the Feast instituted by Saint John Paul II and celebrated on the Sunday after Easter.

In the ancient Hebrew tradition, the Jubilee Year, which was celebrated every 50 years, was meant to restore equality among all of the children of Israel, offering new possibilities to families which had lost

their property and even their personal freedom. In addition, the Jubilee Year was a reminder to the rich that a time would come when their Israelite slaves would once again become their equals and would be able to reclaim their rights. "Justice, according to the Law of Israel, consisted above all in the protection of the weak" (St. John Paul II, *Tertio millennio adveniente* 13).

The Catholic tradition of the Holy Year began with Pope Boniface VIII in 1300. Boniface VIII had envisioned a Jubilee every century. From 1475 onwards – in order to allow each generation to experience at least one Holy Year – the ordinary Jubilee was to be celebrated every 25 years. However, an extraordinary Jubilee may be announced on the occasion of an event of particular importance.

Until present, there have been 26 ordinary Holy Year celebrations, the last of which was the Jubilee of 2000. The custom of calling extraordinary Jubilees dates back to the XVI century. The last extraordinary Holy Years, which were celebrated during the previous century, were those in 1933, proclaimed by Pius XI to celebrate XIX hundred years of Redemption and in 1983, proclaimed by John Paul II on the occasion of the 1950 years of Redemption.

The Catholic Church has given to the Hebrew Jubilee a more spiritual significance. It consists in a general pardon, an indulgence open to all, and the possibility to renew one's relationship with God and neighbor. Thus, the Holy Year is always an opportunity to deepen one's faith and to live with a renewed commitment to Christian witness.

With the *Jubilee of Mercy*, Pope Francis focuses attention upon the merciful God who invites all men and women to return to Him. The encounter with God inspires in one the virtue of mercy.

The initial rite of the Jubilee is the opening of the Holy Door. This door is one which is only opened during the Holy Year and which remains closed during all other years. Each of the four major basilicas of Rome has a Holy Door: Saint Peter's, St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls and St. Mary Major. This rite of the opening of the Holy Door illustrates symbolically the idea that, during the Jubilee, the faithful are offered an "extraordinary pathway" towards salvation. The Holy Doors of the other Basilicas will be opened after the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica.

Mercy is a theme very dear to Pope Francis, as is expressed in the episcopal motto he had chosen: "*miserando atque eligendo*". This citation is taken from the homily of Saint Bede the Venerable during which he commented on the Gospel passage of the calling of Saint Matthew: "*Vidit ergo Iesus publicanum et quia miserando atque eligendo vidit, ait illi Sequere me*" (Jesus therefore sees the tax collector, and since he sees by having mercy and by choosing, he says to him, 'follow me'). This homily is a tribute to divine mercy. One possible translation of this motto is "With eyes of mercy".

During the first Angelus after his elections, the Holy Father stated: "Feeling mercy, that this word changes everything. This is the best thing we can feel: it changes the world. A little mercy makes the world less cold and more just. We need to understand properly this mercy of God, this merciful Father who is so patient" (Angelus, March 17, 2013).

In his Angelus on January 11, 2015, he stated: "There is so much need of mercy today, and it is important that the lay faithful live it and bring it into different social environments. Go forth! We are living in the age of mercy, this is the age of mercy". Then, in his 2015 Lenten Message, the Holy Father

expressed: "How greatly I desire that all those places where the Church is present, especially our parishes and our communities, may become islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference!"

In the English edition of the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* the term *mercy* appears 32 times.

Pope Francis has entrusted the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization with the organization of the *Jubilee of Mercy*.

Comments

We will begin looking at calendars and exploring possibilities of how to observe this Jubilee in our diocese while waiting to see if there are further instructions or recommendations from either the Vatican or the USCCB. As parishes begin to plan their Advent and Lenten activities in particular they should keep the Holy Year in mind—including, should the Holy Father call for it again, the observance of "24 Hours for the Lord" (this year, observed on the 3rd Saturday of Lent).

The website for the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization is:
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/new-evangelization/index.htm

RESOURCE: HOMILETIC DIRECTORY

Summary §§1-3

In the Introduction to the new *Homiletic Directory* we are reminded (§1) that this document was requested by those who took part in the Synod of Bishops in 2008 on the Word of God (*Verbum domini* #60). Pope Benedict had already made the homily a matter of concern (*Sacramentum caritatis* #46) and his successor, Pope Francis, has continued to make preaching a priority for the life of the Church (*Evangelii gaudium* #135-159).

The authors note that the aim of the *Directory* is twofold: (1) "to present the purpose of the homily as this has been described in the documents of the Church from the Second Vatican Council to the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*," and (2) "to offer guidance based on these resources to help preachers carry out their mission properly and effectively" (§2).

From this review, the authors draw four themes for our particular attention (§2):

1. The place of the Word of God in the liturgy, and the implications of this relationship for the homily (*Sacrosanctum concilium* 24, 35, 52, 56).
2. The principles of Catholic biblical interpretation and the impact of such on the liturgical homily (*Dei Verbum* #9-13, 21).
3. The consequences for the preacher of this understanding of the Bible and of the liturgy – that this should shape not just homily preparation but the preacher's whole spiritual life (*Dei Verbum* 25; *Presbyterorum ordinis* 4, 18).
4. The preacher must attend to the needs of the listener, including the culture and circumstances in which the preaching is to take place; the preacher must preach in a way that he can be heard (*Ad gentes* 6).

The introduction concludes with an important admonition, highlighting what is at the core of the preaching ministry. While a competent preacher must attend to developing his (or her) skills as a public speaker, learning how to use voice and gesture effectively, “[w]hat is essential, however, is that the preacher makes the Word of God central to his own spiritual life, that he knows his people well, that he be reflective on the events of the times, that he continually seeks to develop the skills that help him preach effectively and above all, that in his spiritual poverty, he invites in faith the Holy Spirit as the principal agent that makes the hearts of the faithful amenable to the divine mysteries” (§3).

Response

So: liturgical context, biblical hermeneutics, the person of the preacher, and the context of the listeners – all these must be attended to if we are to preach effectively. As a teacher of homiletics, I am gratified to see a Vatican document make these four points explicit: this is what most of us who teach homiletics have been saying for decades.

The Directory itself is no longer available on-line; once it is available for sale via the USCCB we will make that information available.

UPCOMING EVENTS

See the Liturgy Events webpage at: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/litevents.htm>.

DIOCESAN LITURGIES

Ordination

Ordinations to the diaconate and presbyterate will be celebrated at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Saturday, June 6, at 10:00 a.m.

Please consider including the candidates for ordination in your intercessions, for example:

For those who will be ordained this June for ministry in our diocese; we pray to the Lord:

That those who will be ordained to the diaconate and priesthood this June will faithfully follow the Good Shepherd as they serve the Diocese of Davenport; we pray to the Lord:

CONTINUING FORMATION FOR LITURGY / LITURGICAL MINISTRY

Rensselaer Program of Church Music and Liturgy

June 28-30: Advanced Seminar in Liturgy - "From Multicultural to Intercultural"

June 28-30: Gregorian Chant Institute

July 1-3: Liturgy Intensives: (1) Ritual & Symbol, (2) Liturgical Music, (3) Introduction to Sacraments

A promotional flyer and registration form are included with this edition of *LiturgyNotes*.

TeamRCIA: August 14-15, 2015 – St. Patrick, Iowa City (6:30pm Friday to 4pm Saturday)
(<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/litevents.htm#Formation>)

Registration is now open!

Our conference will focus on “Making Disciples” - the basic process and skills needed for RCIA... a great review for veterans and the perfect introduction for ‘newbies’! This offering aims to help participants:

- *Discover how the RCIA is a powerful conversion process
- *Learn how to apply the core principles of the RCIA to any faith formation process
- *Acquire the skills to build an evangelizing parish that involves the entire community in the RCIA
- *Know how to recruit and build a thriving RCIA team
- *Learn how to grow a pool of passionate, engaged sponsors

A promotional flyer is included with this edition of *LiturgyNotes*.

For more opportunities, see the *Liturgy Events* webpage at: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/litevents.htm>.

AVAILABLE: BALDWIN ORGAN



Baldwin organ, about 30-40 years old. Mahogany (?) wood. Height 39 inches, length 48 inches, width 28 inches. Plays well. Has cover and is on a wheeled base. We are not asking anything for it, other than whoever wants it will have to move it. Contact: St. Mary’s Parish, Iowa City, Iowa; 319-337-4314 or icstmary@icstmary.org. ATTN: Patti McTaggart. Other photos available on request (contact Dc. Agnoli).

LITURGY PREPARATION

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Ordinary Time

As you begin looking ahead to ordinary time—and especially weekday celebrations—please remember that a wealth of Votive Masses and Masses for Various Needs and Occasions are available. You may also want to consider a number of rites from the Book of Blessings as the summer approaches, for example:

For new drivers, especially as school lets out: Order for the Blessing of the Various Means of Transportation.

Especially for rural parishes: Order for the Blessing of Boats and Fishing Gear; Order for the Blessing of Fields and Flocks; and Order for the Blessing of Seeds at Planting Time.

Since this is a common time for moves to take place: Order for Welcoming of New Parishioners; and Order for the Blessing of a Departing Parishioner.

INTERCESSIONS

Here are resources for the Universal Prayer:

- (1) Intercessions for various life issues may be found on the USCCB website at:
<http://usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/prayers/intercessory-prayers-for-life.cfm>
- (2) Intercession for vocations (in English and Spanish) keyed to the lectionary cycle may be found at the Diocese of Arlington website:
http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/vocations/voc_intercessions.aspx
- (3) Lectionary-based intercessions focused on social justice can be found at the Center of Concern website:
<http://www.coc.org/ef>
- (4) The Center for Liturgy website offers general intercessions for each Sunday as well:
<http://liturgy.slu.edu/>
- (5) The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops offers intercessions and homily ideas as part of their Pastoral Initiative for Life and Family:
<http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/church-in-canada-and-world/catholic-church-in-canada/life-and-family/3296-documents-and-activities-proposed-by-the-ccb>
- (6) See also our website for prayer resources in times of crisis:
<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/litlibrary.htm#Prayers>

If you have received this newsletter in error, or no longer wish to receive *LiturgyNotes*, please contact Laurie Hoefling at the chancery and request to be removed from our distribution list.

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