

Preaching the Lectionary

Proclaiming Christ today

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Sequence

- Prayer
- Experience of preaching
- The Lectionary
- Sunday's Gospel

Prayer

But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. (Romans 10:6-10 NRSV)

Experience of preaching

- Your experience and wisdom
- My own interest in preaching
- We had a bit of training in preaching – actually quite informal.
- From the start: interested in communication, preaching etc. (Mallow!)
- Experience as a secondary teacher and then as a lecturer.
- Church of Ireland College: teaching "homiletics"
- Recently: helping the trainee deacons of Dublin diocese.

Preparation

- Knowing your audience
- What needs to be said
- Gathering in ideas and approaches
- Persuasive sequence

Classical Rhetoric

1. *Inventio*: "what needs to be said here"
2. *Dispositio*: persuasive sequence
3. *Elocutio*: making it sound good
4. *Memoria*: commit it to memory
5. *Pronuntiatio*: practice speaking

1. *Exordium*: introduction
2. (*Narratio*): background info
3. *Propositio*: main topic
4. *Probatio(nes)*: proofs
5. *Peroratio*: conclusion

Assumptions

- Rooted in the Word
- Simple ≠ simplistic
- Heart
- Head

Lectionary

- Your experience as a listener?
- Your experience as a preacher?
- Questions which arise as a result

Before Vatican II

- The use of the Bible before Vatican II
- The "rediscovery" of the Word
- The use of the Bible after Vatican II

After Pentecost	Epistle	Gospel
Fourteenth	Gal 5:16-24	Mt 6:24-33
Fifteenth	Gal 6:1-10	Lk 7:11-16
Sixteenth	Eph 3:13-21	Lk 14:1-12

- One-year lectionary: Epistle and Gospel
- All in Latin (Gospel sometimes in English)

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Sundays	21	3	18	12
Feasts	5	1	3	8
Total	26	4	21	20

Vatican II

	Verses total in the Bible	Verses used in the Missal	% used in the Missal
NT Gospels	3997	848 (1962)	22.4% (1962)
		2181 (1969)	57.8% (1969)
NT Epistles	4178	461	11%
		1061	25.4%
OT Readings	25,044	255	1.02%
		932	3.7%

After Vatican II

- The treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years.
- *Constitution on the Liturgy* 51
- Gustave Fontaine
- Annibale Bugnini
- 31 Bible scholars
- 800 "Others" for review and comment
- Several experimental lectionaries
- Continuous readings?
- Thematic readings?
- How many "cycles"?
- Retention of the old Lectionary?

Layout in Ordinary Time

- The Gospel sets the theme (semi-continuous reading)
- In preparation, the First Reading (usually OT)
- In response, the psalm "voices" our reception
- The Second Reading is (semi-)continuous reading from the Acts or a letter (thematically unconnected)
- A three-year cycle: a Gospel per year
- Matthew (2017), Mark (2018), and Luke (2019)
- Continuous reading, story after story
- What about John?
- Christmas, Lent and Easter
- In the year of Mark: John 6 (summer)

	2C 2019	3C 2019	4C 2019	5C 2019
First Reading	Isaiah 62:1-5 The restoration of Jerusalem	Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10 Ezra reads the Law	Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19 Call of the prophet	Isaiah 6:1-2,3-8 Call of the prophet
Psalm	Ps 95 Sing a new song!	Ps 18 God's Law is perfect	Ps 70 In you, O Lord, I take refuge	Ps 138 You stretch out your hand and save me
Second Reading	1Cor 12:4-11 Variety of gifts	1Cor 12:12-30 A body has many parts	1 Cor 12:31-13:13 Love is always patient...	1 Corinthians 15:1-11 Witnesses of the resurrection
Gospel	John 2:1-11 Wedding feast of Cana	Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21 Jesus reads Isaiah	Luke 4:21-30 Jesus the prophet	Luke 5:1-11 Call of the first disciples

- FOR EXAMPLE YEAR OF LUKE (2019) A=Advent; X=Christmas, L=Lent; EV=Easter Vigil; ES = Easter Sunday; As = Ascension; CC=Corpus Christi; PS = Palm Sunday

1	A4, 3	9	CC, 12, 13, L2	17	27, 28
2	X1, X2, X3	10	14, 15, 16	18	29, 30
3	A2, A3, Bapt	11	17	19	31, PS
4	L1, 3, 4	12	18, 19, 20	20	32
5	5	13	L3, 21	21	A1, 33
6	6, 7, 8	14	22, 23	22	PS
7	9, 10, 11	15	L4, 24	23	34
8	–	16	25, 26	24	EV, ES, As

Luke	Sundays	Feasts
1-2	Sunday 3	Advent 4; Christmas 1, 2, 3,
3-7	Sundays 3-11	Advent 2, 3; Bapt; Lent 1
9-16	Sundays 12-26	Lent 2, 3, 4; Corpus Christi
17-23	Sundays 27-33	Advent 1, Palm Sunday,
24	–	Easter Vigil, Easter Sunday, Ascension Sunday

Layout in the Festive Seasons

- All three readings are on the same theme
- The Gospels are chosen topically
- Even the Gospel is not read consecutively
- The Second Reading is also not consecutive
- Year C (2019) is a good illustration

Year C	Advent 1	Advent 2	Advent 3	Advent 4
First Reading	Jer 33:14-16 Promise about David	Baruch 5:1-9 Return from Exile	Zeph 3:14-18 Shout for joy, daughter of Zion	Micah 5:1-4 Prophecy about Bethlehem
Psalm	Ps 25 (24) To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul	Ps 126 (125) When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage	Is 12 Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel	Ps 80 (79) You stretch out your hand and save me
Second Reading	1 Thess 3:12-4:2 Blameless when our Lord Jesus Christ comes	Phil 1:4-6,8-11 To become pure and spotless....to prepare for the day	Phil 4:4-7 I want you to be happy	Heb 10:5-10 Here I am! I am coming to obey your will.
Gospel	Luke 21:25-28, 34-36 Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen	Luke 3:1-6 John the Baptist: a voice cries in the wilderness	Luke 3:10-18 John the Baptist denies he is the Christ and proclaims the "coming one"	Luke 1:39-44 The Visitation

1st Sunday of Lent	Deut. 26:4-10 Ancient "creed" A wandering Aramean was my father...	Rom. 10:8-13 The word is on your lips and in your heart	Lk. 4:1-13 Temptation
2nd Sunday of Lent	Gen. 15:5-12, 17-18 Abraham God's covenant and promise	Phil. 3:17-4:1 Our future transfiguration	Lk. 9:28b-36 The Transfiguration
3rd Sunday of Lent	Ex. 3:1-8a, 13-15 Moses The Burning Bush	1 Cor. 10:1-6, 10-12 The Moses story as an allegory of Christ	Lk. 13:1-9 Repentance and the parable of the fig tree
4th Sunday of Lent	Josh. 5:9a, 10-12 Joshua The first passover in the Promised Land	2 Cor. 5:17-21 The ministry of reconciliation	Lk. 15:1-3, 11-32 The parable of the prodigal son
5th Sunday of Lent	Isa. 43:16-21 The Exile God promises a new deed	Phil. 3:8-14 Paul strains ahead for what is still to come	Jn. 8:1-11 The woman caught committing adultery (on her own)

	Acts of the Apostles	Psalm	Revelation	John
Easter 2	5:12-16 Summary of the rapid expansion of The Way	117 This day was made by the Lord	1:9-13, 17-19 Vision of the seer of the Son of Man	20:19-31 Doubting Thomas; Gospel purpose
Easter 3	5:27-32, 40-41 Peter bears witness before the High priest	29 Joy comes with dawn	5:11-14 Worship of the Lamb on the Throne	21:1-19 By the Sea of Tiberias; Peter is restored
Easter 4	13:14, 43-52 Paul turns to the pagans	99 We are his people, the sheep of his flock	7:9, 14-17 The redeemed before the throne	10:27-30 The sheep will never be lost
Easter 5	14:21-27 A travel summary: Asia Minor to Syria	144 All you creatures shall thank you	21:1-5 The new heavens and the new earth	13:31-33, 34-35 A new commandment: love one another
Easter 6	15:1-3, 22-29 The "council" of Jerusalem	66 Let all the peoples praise you	21:10-14, 22-23 The new Jerusalem, dressed like a bride	14:23-29 The advocate will teach you everything

And St Paul?

Sunday 2-8	1 Corinthians
Sunday 9-14	Galatians
Sunday 15-18	Colossians
Sunday 19-22	Hebrews
Sunday 23	Philemon
Sunday 24-30	1 and 2 Timothy
Sunday 31-33	2 Thessalonians
Christ the King	Colossians 1:12-20

Year C (2019)	29 September (26C19)	6 October (27C19)	13 October (28C19)	20 October (29C19)
First Reading	Amos 6:1,4-7 Judgment against the rich oppressors of the poor	Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4 The upright man will live by his faithfulness	2 Kings 5:14-17 Naaman the Syrian	Exodus 17:8-13 The raised arms of Moses
Psalm	Ps 146 (145) The Lord supports the oppressed	Ps 95 (94) O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'	Ps 98 (97) The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations	Ps 121 (120) Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth
Second Reading	1 Tim 6:11-16 Fight the good fight of the faith	2 Tim 1:6-8,13-14 Keep to sound teaching	2 Tim 2:8-13 He is always faithful	2 Tim 3:14-4:2 Proclaim the message, welcome or unwelcome
Gospel	Luke 16:19-31 The rich man and Lazarus	Luke 17:5-10 Faith the size of a mustard seed.	Luke 17:11-19 The ten lepers	Luke 18:1-8 The unjust judge and the importunate widow

The Challenge of the Lectionary

- The challenge of the lectionary to the faithful
- The challenge of the preacher!
- Pluses and minuses of the lectionary
- The Revised Common Lectionary

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 66:18-21

I will gather the nations of every language

The Lord says this: I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory. I will give them a sign and send some of their survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Put, Lud, Moshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, to the distant islands that have never heard of me or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory to the nations. As an offering to the Lord they will bring all your brothers, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, on dromedaries, from all the nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem, says the Lord, like Israelites bringing oblations in clean vessels to the Temple of the Lord. And of some of them I will make priests and Levites, says the Lord.

Ps 117 (116)

Praise the Lord, all you nations

O praise the Lord, all you nations,
acclaim him all you peoples!
Strong is his love for us;
he is faithful for ever.

Hebrews

12:5-7,11-13

Suffering is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons

Have you forgotten that encouraging text in which you are addressed as sons? My son, when the Lord corrects you, do not treat it lightly; but do not get discouraged when he reprimands you. For the Lord trains the ones that he loves and he punishes all those that he acknowledges as his sons. Suffering is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons. Has there ever been any son whose father did not train him? Of course, any punishment is most painful at the time, and far from pleasant; but later, in those on whom it has been used, it bears fruit in peace and goodness. So hold up your limp arms and steady your trembling knees and smooth out the path you tread; then the injured limb will not be wrenched, it will grow strong again.

Luke 13:22-30

And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast

Through towns and villages Jesus went teaching, making his way to Jerusalem. Someone said to him, 'Sir, will there be only a few saved?' He said to them, 'Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter and will not succeed.

'Once the master of the house has got up and locked the door, you may find yourself knocking on the door, saying, "Lord, open to us" but he will answer, "I do not know where you come from." Then you will find yourself saying, "We once ate and drank in your company; you taught in our streets" but he will reply, "I do not know where you come from. Away from me, all you wicked men!"

'Then there will be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves turned outside. And men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.

'Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.'

Lectio steps

- Quiet prayer
- Gospel (1) – spontaneous
- Gospel (2) – understanding
- Gospel (3) – entry into the text
- Gospel (4) – repeated readings
- Gospel (5) – prayer
- Thanksgiving