

Winter 2014

Back Cover: The Homily (Pope Francis)

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The Homily

The homily is the touchstone for judging a pastor's closeness and ability to communicate to his people. We know that the faithful attach great importance to it, and that both they and their ordained ministers suffer because of homilies: the laity from having to listen to them and the clergy from having to preach them!

The homily cannot be a form of entertainment like those presented by the media, yet it does need to give life and meaning to the celebration ... it should be brief and avoid taking on the semblance of a speech or a lecture.

... in the homily the Lord and his people want someone to serve as an instrument and to express their feelings in such a way that afterward, each one may choose how he or she will continue the conversation.

One of the most important things is to learn how to use images in preaching, how to appeal to imagery ... an attractive image makes the message seem familiar, close to home, practical and related to everyday life.

The greatest risk for a preacher is that he becomes so accustomed to his own language that he thinks everyone else naturally understands and uses it.

— *Pope Francis*

