

HOMILY HELPS

*(Key Reflection Points from Catechetical Sunday 2011
through Christmas 2011)*



The following brief notes for each Sunday in the months before and immediately after the implementation of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, are derived from the Lectionary readings for the day. These notes will help homilists, catechists who are responsible for breaking open the Word for catechumens, and others who lead reflection groups on the Sunday readings to invite the faithful to a renewed participation in the Liturgy and to a deeper relationship with the Lord in the Eucharist.

September 18, 2011: Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ✠ The Lord's ways are not our ways, nor are his thoughts our thoughts. In a few months, we will begin using a revised missal. The language may seem awkward and unfamiliar, but it will assist us in developing a liturgical language that reflects the dignity of the mysteries we celebrate.
- ✠ St. Paul calls on us to magnify Christ by our living and our dying. In Liturgy—the work of the people—we magnify Christ by uniting the joys and sorrows of our daily living to his perfect sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

September 25, 2011: Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ✠ In the Sacred Liturgy, we join with the faithful in all times and places to “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:11).
- ✠ In the Eucharistic Liturgy, we gather as the Body of Christ to be “united in heart, thinking one thing” (Phil 2:2).
- ✠ “Full, conscious, and active participation” (SC, no. 14) in the Liturgy forms us in the way of righteousness, so that our words and actions may be one.

October 2, 2011: Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ✠ We gather in the Liturgy in order to, “by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make [our] requests known to God” (Phil 4:6). We offer our lives in loving service to God and to his people, and we ask God in humble trust for all we need.

- ⌘ Strengthened by our common celebration and by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, our faith must bear fruit.

October 9, 2011: Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ⌘ The Eucharistic Liturgy we celebrate each Sunday is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, the wedding feast of the Lamb, described in today's readings.
- ⌘ At the eucharistic table, all are equal. There must be no division of wealth, race, or nation. All who believe must join in giving praise and worship to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit.
- ⌘ As the guest must come with his wedding garment, we must come with our hearts and minds prepared to participate fully in the Liturgy.

October 16, 2011: Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ⌘ In his first Letter to the Thessalonians, Paul expresses "thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers" (1 Thes 1:2). In the Eucharistic Liturgy, we join with the clergy and faithful throughout the world to pray for the needs of the Church and the world.
- ⌘ By participating fully in the Liturgy, we offer to God what belongs to God by uniting our prayers, our actions, and our very selves to Christ's perfect oblation of praise and thanksgiving.

October 23, 2011: Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ⌘ The greatest commandment describes the "full, conscious, and active" participation in the Liturgy to which we are all called (SC, no. 14). We must take part in the Liturgy with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind.
- ⌘ Through our participation in the Liturgy and our reception of the Eucharist, we must be conformed ever more closely to Christ. As we receive Christ truly present in the Eucharist, we must strive to imitate him ever more closely.

October 30, 2011: Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ⌘ Through the celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy, the Church throughout the world gives "thanks to God unceasingly." The fruits of the Liturgy should likewise be "at work in [all] who believe" (1 Thes 2:13).
- ⌘ In the Gospel, Jesus warns about those who burden others without offering to assist. In the second reading, Paul highlights the care and gentleness with which he approached those to whom he was called. As the implementation of the revised Liturgy draws near, it is important to recognize the unease that some people may feel about the changes and gently help these people to accept the changes with an open heart and mind.

November 6, 2011: Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ⌘ Today's Gospel is a parable about being prepared. As the wise virgins were prepared to enter the wedding feast with the bridegroom, so too must we prepare to celebrate the wedding feast of the Lamb worthily and well.
- ⌘ The reading from the Book of Wisdom invites the faithful to seek wisdom in all things. The revised texts of the Liturgy may seem strange to our ears at first, but we must prudently take the time to seek out the deeper meanings they convey.

November 13, 2011: Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

- ⌘ God calls us to be prudent with the gifts given to us, guarding them carefully, yet using them well. The Liturgy is the great treasure of the Church. The Church takes great care to ensure that the Liturgy, in every age, expresses the truths of our faith, strengthens the faithful in their Christian living, and, through Christ and in the Spirit, offers a worthy sacrifice to the Father.

- ⊗ Although the form of the Liturgy may differ in various times and places, it remains a witness to an unchanged faith and an unbroken tradition (see the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, Preamble).

November 20, 2011: Solemnity of Christ the King

- ⊗ Today's gospel reading reminds us once again of the essential relationship between the Eucharistic Liturgy and Christian living. Those who worship and receive the Body of Christ in the Eucharist are called to serve him in the lowliest and most vulnerable members of society.
- ⊗ In times of struggle, pain, and confusion, we turn our hearts and minds to the Lord, who, in his Church, will shepherd us along the path that leads to life.
- ⊗ In our liturgy and our living, we have but one goal: "that God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28).

Sundays of Advent

The First Sunday of Advent will mark the first use of the *Roman Missal*. In these first few weeks, it will be important to recognize people's unease with the

revised texts while still maintaining the full celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy and the Advent season. These homily tips may help:

- ⊗ Although each Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical year, this Advent marks the beginning of a renewed moment in the Church's liturgical life. In Advent, we prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas and at the end of time. So should we intensify our participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy to prepare for the coming of Christ into our hearts in the Holy Eucharist.
- ⊗ Use the Collect or Preface as a principal text for the homily. In the first two weeks of Advent, these texts focus on the twofold coming of Christ—as a child at Christmas and in glory at the end of time. In the last two weeks, these texts will focus more specifically on preparing to celebrate the Incarnation of Jesus, emphasizing its necessary relationship to the Paschal Mystery we celebrate in the Eucharistic Liturgy.