

It's Like Having Dinner with the King!



The next part of the Mass is the Gospel, which I think most everyone is familiar with. I will just mention that it, like everything else up to this point, can (and sometimes should) be sung. And now, the moment we have all been waiting for with bated breath...the first part of the Mass that the Church does not provide specific text for, and which is not sung, is the homily or sermon. The homily is meant to “unpack” the Mass, not only the Readings, but the rest of the Ordinary and Propers as well (see General Instruction of the Roman Missal 65-66, Sacrosanctum Concilium 52, and Canon Law 767). Because this is the only time during the Mass where the priest is speaking colloquially to us (exceptions being made for the announcements and brief introductions/explanations - see GIRM 50, 90) there is no chant ascribed. The homily is also not technically part of the Ordinary or Propers as its text is not prescribed by the Church, rather, composed by the minister.

Following the homily is a period of silence - just as after all the readings. This period of silence is really important. In teaching we call it wait time - giving each student a good amount of time to really think about something before moving on. Like with a fine multi-course meal, the Lord “feeds” us with His word, and then gives us some time to digest it before moving on. Imagine the terrible experience you would have at a 13-course meal if the waiter brought out all 13 courses at the same time! The salad gets soggy, the steak grows cold, and the ice cream melts - all while you are trying to find places to put all the food because your table is too small. In a similar manner, we need this time of Sacred Silence to fully “digest” and “enjoy the fruits” of the Word of God (see GIRM 56).

St. Cecilia, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity...Pray for us!

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