



National Eucharistic Revival

John 6 Preaching Series Guide

The Bread of Life Discourse | July 28th – August 25th

WHAT IS A HOMILY?

The *Introduction of the Lectionary* sets forth the purpose of the homily:

Through the course of the liturgical year the homily sets forth the mysteries of faith and the standards of the Christian life on the basis of the sacred text. [...] The purpose of the homily at Mass is that the spoken word of God and the liturgy of the Eucharist may together become “a proclamation of God’s wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ” [Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 35, 2]. Through the readings and homily Christ’s Paschal Mystery is proclaimed; through the sacrifice of the Mass it becomes present. Moreover Christ himself is always present and active in the preaching of his Church.

Whether the homily explains the text of the Sacred Scriptures proclaimed in the readings or some other text of the Liturgy, it must always lead the community of the faithful to celebrate the Eucharist actively, “so that they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by faith” [SC, no. 10]. From this living explanation, the word of God proclaimed in the readings and the Church’s celebration of the day’s Liturgy will have greater impact. But this demands that the homily be truly the fruit of meditation, carefully prepared, neither too long nor too short, and suited to all those present, even children and the uneducated (24).



Using This Preaching Series Guide

This booklet covers the Sundays from July 28th to August 25th, which feature John Chapter 6, the Bread of Life Discourse.

What you will find in this preaching guide:

A LIST OF READINGS FOR THAT SUNDAY

KEY DOCTRINAL POINTS

A list of doctrinal points contained within the readings with references to corresponding paragraphs in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for further reflection and meditation, as provided by the *Homiletic Directory*, [Appendix A](#).

FOCUS VERSES

A short list of Scripture verses that make helpful connection points between the readings and the overall themes for that Sunday.

GOALS

The key truths in the homily that the faithful should wrestle with and, through God's grace, interiorize as a result of hearing this kerygmatic preaching. No more than two goals. Keep it simple/manageable.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Questions for the homilist to take to prayer as he prepares to preach on the readings.



Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Stephen Dominic Hayes, OP | July 28th

MASS READINGS

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/072824.cfm>

2 Kgs 4:42-44
Ps 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18 (16)
Eph 4:1-6
Lk 7:16
Jn 6:1-15

KEY DOCTRINAL POINTS

CCC 1335: the miracle of the loaves and fishes prefigures the Eucharist
CCC 814-815, 949-959: sharing of gifts in the communion of the Church

FOCUS VERSES

Psalm 145: 15-16 "The eyes of all look hopefully to you, and you give them their food in due season; you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

Jn 6:4 "The Jewish feast of Passover was near."

Jn 6:13 "So they collected them, and filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves that had been more than they could eat."

Jn 6:14 "When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, 'This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world.'"

GOALS

- This miracle (multiplication of the loaves and fishes) prepares faithful disciples to accept the doctrine of the Eucharist presented in the rest of Chapter 6, the Bread of Life Discourse, as truly "the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:68).
- The miracle shows the identity of Jesus as the Word of God made flesh who will provide a new manna, his flesh, "for the life of the world" (Jn 6:51b).
- The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 prophesies the shape of the worship of Holy Church and the advent of the Sacrament which gives her continued life and intimacy with Jesus.

REFLECTION QUESTION(S)

1. The hungry people of Israel were fed with manna in the desert; in what superabundant ways does Jesus feed us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar?
2. Many Christians think the Holy Eucharist to be simply symbolic. How does this Gospel show the reality of divine power at work in Jesus? Does he have the power to reshape nature, to truly transform bread and wine into his Body and Blood?
3. How is the sacramental life of the Church a new exodus into new life both here and hereafter in the company of Jesus?



Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Paul Shelton, SJ | August 4th

MASS READINGS

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/080424.cfm>

Ex 16:2-4, 12-15
Ps 78:3-4, 23-24, 25, 54 (24b)
Eph 4:17, 20-24
Mt 4:4b
Jn 6:24-35

KEY DOCTRINAL POINTS

CCC 153-165: The characteristics of faith
CCC 1333-1336: Eucharistic signs of bread and wine
CCC 1691-1696: Life in Christ

FOCUS VERSES

Ex 16:2-3 "The whole Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, 'Would that we had died at the LORD's hand...'"

Ex 16:15 "This is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat."

Eph 4:23-24 "Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self."

Jn 6:29 "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent.'"

Jn 6:35 "Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst."

GOALS

- "Believing is possible only by grace and the interior helps of the Holy Spirit. But it is no less true that believing is an authentically human act." (CCC 154)
- God provides for our needs but not always in the way we anticipate
- True life is found in Christ, who is available to us in the Eucharist.

REFLECTION QUESTION(S)

1. How do I choose to believe when it is difficult to do so?
2. What old ways do I need to put away so that I may find life in Christ?
3. In what ways does the Eucharist feed me?



Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Jorge Torres | August 11th

MASS READINGS

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/081124.cfm>

1 Kgs 19:4–8

Ps 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9 (9a)

Eph 4:30–5:2

Jn 6:51

Jn 6:41–51

Devotional Connection: St. Lawrence, August 10th;
St. Clare of Assisi, August 11th

KEY DOCTRINAL POINTS

CCC 1341–1344: “Do this in memory of me”

CCC 1384–1390: Take and eat—Communion

FOCUS VERSES

1 Kgs 19:4 “Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.”

Eph 4:30 “You were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Jn 6:41 “The Jews murmured about [Jesus].”

Jn 6:42 “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph?”

Jn 6:43 “Stop murmuring among yourselves.”

Jn 6:48 “I am the bread of life.”

Jn 6:51 “...and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”

GOALS

- Each person should wrestle with how they have responded to the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, especially in times of hardship.
- We—disciples of Jesus—experience the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus in our lives (CCC 1341) by being invited to unite our sufferings and triumphs with Jesus.
- Jesus, present in the Eucharist, is near to the broken-hearted.

REFLECTION QUESTION(S)

1. When have I struggled with uniting my sufferings and triumphs with Jesus? Or what have parishioners shared that offers insights into their hardships and struggles? How does the Eucharist satisfy these internal and external aches?
2. When do I choose “temporal bread”—like entertainment or pleasures—instead of Jesus the Bread of Life? Why?
3. [St. Clare confided in Jesus in the Eucharist](#) to protect her and her sisters when Assisi was under attack by the Saracens. How does she inspire you to entrust yourself more fully to Jesus in the Eucharist?
4. In what ways am I being invited by Jesus to help people encounter him in his Paschal Mystery, especially in the Eucharist?



Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Jorge Torres | August 18th

MASS READINGS

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/081824.cfm>

Prv 9:1–6

Ps 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7 (9a)

Eph 5:15–20

Jn 6:56

Jn 6:51–58

KEY DOCTRINAL POINTS

CCC 1336: To receive in faith the gift of his Eucharist is to receive the Lord himself.

FOCUS VERSES

Prv 9:2 “She has dressed her meat, mixed her wine.”

Prv 9:4 “Let whoever is simple turn in here.”

Ps 34:9 “Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.”

Eph 5:20 “Giving thanks always and for everything.”

Jn 6:51 “My flesh for the life of the world.”

Jn 6:52 “The Jews quarreled among themselves.”

Jn 6:55 “My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.”

GOALS

- The doctrine of the Real Presence has been a source of tension and doubt from the time Jesus proclaimed it.
- Jesus is truly, fully, and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament.
- CCC 1336: “... To receive in faith the gift of his Eucharist is to receive the Lord himself.” If one finds himself or herself doubting Christ’s Presence in the Eucharist, they ought to pray for the gift of faith.

REFLECTION QUESTION(S)

1. When have I quarreled or wrestled with the Lord? What resolves the tension? Jacob wrestled with the Lord, and the Israelites quarreled in the desert after leaving Egypt. It would be good to help people make the distinction between the two.
2. Study and ponder some Eucharistic miracles. How do these incredible stories impact our belief in the Blessed Sacrament?
3. Priesthood and the Eucharist are inseparable. Reflect upon and prepare to share your testimony about the moment you realized Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist.
4. The Israelites consistently quarreled after leaving Egypt, and the Gospel writer alludes to that here. What parallels can be drawn, and how can the rift be healed?



Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fr. Luke Spannagel | August 25th

MASS READINGS

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/082524.cfm>

Jos 24:1–2a, 15–17, 18b

Ps 34:2–3, 16–17, 18–19, 20–21 (9a)

Eph 5:21–32 or Eph 5:2a, 25–32

Jn 6:63c, 68c

Jn 6:60–69

KEY DOCTRINAL POINTS

CCC 796: The Church as the Bride of Christ

CCC 1061–1065: God’s utter fidelity and love

CCC 1612–1617, 2360–2365: Marriage in the Lord

FOCUS VERSES

Josh 24:15 “Joshua addressed all the people: ‘...decide today whom you will serve... As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.’”

Eph 5:25–26a “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her...”

Jn 6:60–61 “This saying is hard; who can accept it?”... “Does this shock you?”

Jn 6:67–69 “Jesus then said to the Twelve, ‘Do you also want to leave?’ Simon Peter answered him, ‘Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.’”

GOALS

- Jesus doesn’t back down on his teaching regarding the Real Presence, which invites us to respond with faith in him and his True Presence in the Eucharist.
- Faithful married love helps us better grasp Christ’s love for the Church and his love for each one of us, shown to us on the Cross, at Mass, and in the Eucharist.
- Faithful witnesses and models encourage us and show us how to trust in Christ and his love for us.

REFLECTION QUESTION(S)

1. What is the place of good leaders like Joshua and Peter in modeling our faith in the Eucharist? How can we encourage our leaders to be strong witnesses?
2. How are the union of spouses, the union of Christ and the Church, and union with Christ in Communion related to each other? How does that inform our understanding of the Eucharist?
3. What are the challenges to believing Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist and in trusting in his words and promises to us? Why are his words a “hard saying?” How can we make St. Peter’s statement of faith our own?