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**Title:** Homily Building Based on Euchological Texts in the Light of Exhortations of the Homiletic Directory

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**Citation style:** Żądło Andrzej. (2020). Homily Building Based on Euchological Texts in the Light of Exhortations of the Homiletic Directory. "Wrocławski Przegląd Teologiczny" (Vol. 28, nr 1 (2020) s. 237-260), doi 10.34839/wpt.2020.28.1.237-260



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## Homily Building Based on Euchological Texts in the Light of Exhortations of the *Homiletic Directory*

Budowanie homilii na bazie tekstów euchologicznych  
w świetle wskazań *Dyrektorium homiletycznego*

**ABSTRACT:** The author devoted the article to the preparation of homilies based on euchological texts. His inspiration was *Homiletic Directory* by the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments. His attention was due to the impression that the *Directory* gave too little consideration to them, especially the methods that can be used to preparing the homily. The *Directory* mentions that the spectrum that inspires homiletic work includes, apart from Bible, typically liturgical texts. Nonetheless, a more thorough reading provokes the impression that focus on biblical readings by far dominates. The method proposed by the *Directory* is *lectio divina*, which is growing out of the patristic exegesis of the spiritual sense of the Scripture. This method considers the biblical texts belonging to the canon recognised to be inspired. Euchological formulas, on the other hand, belong to an open catalogue, so they differ from the biblical texts. Hence the thesis in the article appears that the *lectio divina* method can be used as a model for prayer formulas and treated in an inspiring way, however, the methodology typical for liturgical hermeneutics should be employed. The paper proposes to use the historical-critical method, which allows for reading their diachronicity, and the linguistic (semiotic), which enables their synchronous richness to be explored. The juxtaposition of these methods makes it possible to see how they correspond to each other and thus confirm the rationality of the conducted argument and the validity of the thesis indicating the need to use adequate methods when preparing homilies based on euchological formulas.

**KEYWORDS:** biblical readings, euchological texts, historical-critical and contextual method, homily preaching, *lectio divina*, linguistic (semiotic) method, homily preparation

ABSTRAKT: Autor poświęcił artykuł zagadnieniu przygotowania homilii na bazie tekstów eucharystycznych. Inspirację odnalazł w opublikowanym przez Kongregację ds. Kultu Bożego i Dyscypliny Sakramentów w 2015 roku *Dyrektorium homiletycznym*. Poświęcenie uwagi tekstom eucharystycznym sprowokowane zostało wrażeniem, jakoby we wspomnianym dyrektorium poświęcono im zbyt mało miejsca, szczególnie zaś możliwym do zastosowania metodom w pracy nad nimi w perspektywie przygotowania homilii. W dyrektorium jest mowa o tym, że do spektrum inspirującego twórczość homiletyczną należą – oprócz czytań czerpanych z Biblii – teksty typowo liturgiczne, a więc nade wszystko formuły eucharystyczne, niemniej dokładniejsza lektura dokumentu prowokuje wrażenie, jakoby uwaga skupiona na czytaniach biblijnych była w nim zdecydowanie dominująca. Metodą proponowaną przez dyrektorium jest wyrastająca z patrystycznej egzegezy duchowych sensów Pisma Świętego *lectio divina*. W metodzie tej chodzi o teksty biblijne przynależne do kanonu ksiąg uznanych za natchnione. Eucharystyczne formuły natomiast przynależą do otwartego katalogu, który jest wciąż uzupełniany, więc odróżniają się od tekstów biblijnych. Stąd powstaje w artykule teza, iż metodą *lectio divina* można się w pracy nad formułami modlitewnymi posługiwać modelowo, traktować ją inspirująco, niemniej sięgać należy po metody typowe dla hermeneutyki liturgicznej. W treści opracowania proponuje się korzystanie przy pracy nad homilią na bazie tekstów eucharystycznych z metody historyczno-krytycznej, która pozwala odczytać ich diachroniczność, oraz z metody lingwistycznej (semiotycznej), dzięki której można zgłębić ich bogactwo synchroniczne. Zestawienie tych metod pozwala dostrzec, jak korespondują ze sobą, a przez to potwierdzają racjonalność przeprowadzonego wywodu oraz słuszność tezy wskazującej na potrzebę posługiwania się przy pracy nad homilią na bazie formuł eucharystycznych metodami adekwatnymi.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: czytania biblijne, głoszenie homilii, *lectio divina*, metoda historyczno-krytyczna i kontekstualna, metoda lingwistyczna (semiotyczna), przygotowanie homilii, teksty eucharystyczne

At the outset, it is worth asking what impression the *Homiletic Directory* of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments<sup>1</sup> presented on February 10, 2015 in the Vatican Press Office may produce on the reader: contact with a revolutionary document or a document that echoes the teachings of the Second Vatican Council?

<sup>1</sup> H. Sławiński, *Znaczenie, geneza i struktura „Dyrektorium homiletycznego,”* „Polonia Sacra” 40 (2015), no. 3, p. 155. *Dyrektorium homiletyczne*, Polish edition of Pallottinum, Poznań 2015 (hereinafter: DH). The *Directory* is preceded by a decree of the said Congregation, signed on June 29, 2014 by its then Prefect Cardinal Antonio Cañizarez Llovera and the Secretary of the Congregation, Archbishop Arthur Roche. The latter, on February 10, 2015, together with the new Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, Cardinal Robert Sarah of Guinea, made the official presentation of the document (see: H. Sławiński, *Znaczenie...*, op. cit., p. 155).

The author of this study is convinced that this *Directory*<sup>2</sup> is more like an echo of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, or even, one might say, more than an echo itself. It appears to be a mature fruit of that Council. In fact, it indicates the objectives of the homily according to the characteristics contained in the relevant documents of the Church, from the Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereinafter: KL) to the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (hereinafter: EG) of Pope Francis<sup>3</sup> issued on November 24, 2013. Moreover, it formulates, based on these documents, indications that may help homilists properly and effectively fulfil their mission during the liturgy. It regards a liturgy renewed under the influence of the last General Council, which defines a homily as “part of” the liturgy itself, especially the liturgy of the word.<sup>4</sup> Besides, it presents it as an “instrument” capable of making the process of teaching the mysteries of the faith and the principles of Christian life active (cf. *ibidem*). A homily, precisely since it “belongs inseparably to the liturgy, is not only the instruction, but a [typical] liturgical act, [and even] (...) has (...) a sacramental meaning.”<sup>5</sup>

## The abundant content of euchological texts for building homilies

The “raw material” from which the homily is built is the Scripture, as it contains the inspired word, that is the word of God.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the homily is prepared

<sup>2</sup> The dictionary definition refers a directory to “an ecclesiastical document containing the norms and objectives of proceeding in a particular case” (see: SJP PWN, term: “dyrektorium,” <http://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/dyrektorium;2555701.html> [access: 14.03.2019]). The very name “directory” comes from the Latin *directorium* derived from the verb *dirigere* (direct). It is used to denote a set of detailed norms regulating the conduct and activity of ecclesiastical persons or institutions in a specific field (cf. F. Pasternak, *Dyrektorium*, EK, vol. 4, col. 432; H. Sławiński, *Znaczenie...*, op. cit., p. 156).

<sup>3</sup> Among these documents there are, of course, above all, two introductions, namely *Wprowadzenie do drugiego wydania Lekcjonarza mszalnego* (hereinafter: WLM) (Polish edition [in:] *Lekcjonarz mszalny*, vol. 1: *Okres Adwentu. Okres Narodzenia Pańskiego*, Poznań 2015, pp. 7–55) and *Ogólne wprowadzenie do Mszału rzymskiego* (Polish edition Poznań 2006). These are also *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego* (Polish edition Poznań 2002) and other church documents and liturgical books, indicated in the second supplement to the *Directory* titled *Kościelne źródła posoborowe dotyczące przepowiadania* (see: DH, pp. 103–140).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. KL 52; see also: WLM 24. Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rituals, *Inter oecumenici*, 26.09.1964 (hereinafter: IOe), 26.09.1964, no. 54.

<sup>5</sup> DH 4; cf. also no. 12. For this reason, it is recalled in this *Directory* that the homily “can only be preached by a bishop, presbyter or deacon” (DH 5). All English translations by WTR.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Vatican Council II, *Dei Verbum* 24.

by preachers from pericopes of the Gospel or other mass readings. However, they can also prepare the homily based on a (euchological or non-euchological) liturgical text<sup>7</sup> belonging to the variable or constant parts of the Mass,<sup>8</sup> one of the sacraments or sacramentals, as well as the liturgy of the hours when celebrated in the community of the Church.<sup>9</sup> This principle applies to all kinds of homilies, and it is assumed by the *Homiletic Directory*, which “focuses on the homily of the Sunday Eucharist, but [its] content refers *mutatis mutandis* to the proclamation that is a common part of every sacramental and liturgical celebration.”<sup>10</sup>

### A broad range of sources inspiring homiletic creativity

The title of this study focuses on euchological texts used as a material for building homilies. Thus, the attention is drawn to the most standard liturgical texts, although, as we know, not only prayer formulas are the carrier of the faith celebrated by the Church, which is highlighted in the studied *Homiletic Directory*. For such a carrier are also other elements of rituals which are part of every liturgical celebration is woven, i.e. symbols, gestures, attitudes, actions, material things, silence. Finally, the liturgical year<sup>11</sup> that is celebrated with devotion and divided into periods and types of celebration, and which fulfils an important task for the preaching, is also a carrier.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, regardless of this fact, we have selected – by way of example and not exclusivity – prayer formulas (euchology) as the matter of our interest, and focused on them.

Significantly, the *Homiletic Directory* stresses the broad spectrum of sources that can inspire homiletic creativity. Reminding us of this allows raising our awareness that individual biblical texts can, but not necessarily in the sole sense,

<sup>7</sup> Cf. DH 10.

<sup>8</sup> Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, *Ogólne wprowadzenie do Mszału rzymskiego* 65.

<sup>9</sup> All the texts that belong to the variable (the so-called *proprium*) or fixed (the so-called *ordinarium*) parts of the liturgy can be, according to the post-conciliar documents, an independent homiletic material or a component of it, connected with the biblical text. See: H. Simon, *Teksty liturgiczne jako źródło przepowiadania*, [in:] *Liturgia i przepowiadanie*, serie: *Redemptionis missio*, vol. 29, W. Przyczyna (ed.), Krakow 2010, p. 181.

<sup>10</sup> DH 3.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka w badaniach nad formułami modlitw liturgicznych*, [in:] *Studia Liturgiczne*, vol. 11: *Badania nad liturgią w Polsce po Vaticanum II. Historia – kierunki badań – metodologia*, vol. 168, C. Krakowiak, W. Pałęcki (eds.), Lublin 2015, pp. 103, 104.

<sup>12</sup> H. Simon, *Teksty liturgiczne...*, op. cit., p. 176.

be a source that inspires the theme of preaching.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, observation of everyday life leads us to the conclusion that in homiletic practice, this spectrum is “unfortunately” often, not to say emphatically, narrowed down to biblical texts alone, i.e., readings drawn from the Scripture. Although I express such an opinion without referring to specific studies on the subject, daily experience and personal observation of homiletical practice create the ground for it. I am convinced that the above is reliable and finds confirmation in the existing reality. The list of “schemes” cited by Jan Twardy, which are useful in the process of updating the word of God and which can be applied in work on the homily/confession, supports the observation mentioned above as well.<sup>14</sup>

It is true that during the celebration of the liturgy, also biblical readings take on the rank of liturgical texts since the key to their interpretation is the liturgical context during the celebration.<sup>15</sup> We want to emphasise, following the *Homiletic Directory* inspired by the Second Vatican Council, that the building block for the preparation of the homily can be, as we have signalled above, and even, according to the teaching of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, should be any of the texts appearing in the repertoire of the variable or fixed parts of the Mass or other liturgical celebrations of the Church. This is as it should be because, in line with the teaching of the Constitution on the Liturgy, each of these texts belongs to a treasure trove which, on a par with the Sacred Scripture, although in its own proper way, is counted among the sources that sparkle with content relating to God’s bizarre works in the history of salvation. Not only did this history become a reality in a historical sense in the earthly events of Jesus, but “it is present in us and works (...) in the liturgical rites” (KL 35). That is the reason why the *Homiletic Directory* defines both these biblical readings and the other liturgical texts as “holy texts” – all of them (and thus not just any of them on a selective basis – e.g., exclusively biblical or liturgical ones) can serve as a foundation for the teaching of the mysteries of the faith as well as the principles of Christian life.<sup>16</sup> This is because “the Bible and the

<sup>13</sup> Cf. DH 23.

<sup>14</sup> See: *Aktualizacja słowa Bożego w kaznodziejstwie*, Przemyśl 2009, pp. 400–419. The author on 10 specified pages acquaints the reader with 20 schemes of sermon/homily preparation. In 18 of them, the biblical texts are indicated explicitly as homiletical sources (cf. schemes 1–12 [pp. 400–405] and 14–19 [pp. 406–408]; only schemes 13 and 20 [pp. 405 and 409] do not mention any kind of texts, hence it may mean that it is possible to use them [especially scheme 13] in the preparation of homilies based on euchological texts).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. DH 15.

<sup>16</sup> See: DH 10; cf. KL 52; IOe 54; WLM 24.

liturgy form an organic unity,”<sup>17</sup> and daily life is, in fact, the most appropriate “place” for interpreting and putting into practice the Bible and the liturgy,<sup>18</sup> i.e. a place of continuous creation of the Church’s living Tradition, which is already manifested in the very right choice and combination of readings and liturgical prayers. The texts of such prayers are in themselves “monuments to Tradition and are organically linked to the Sacred Scripture since they either come directly from it or are inspired by it.”<sup>19</sup>

### Justification for building homilies on the foundation of euchological texts

To sum up, it is worth recalling that out of the whole corpus of texts called liturgical the following three groups emerge: 1) Biblical texts, which include readings, psalms, responsories and some antiphonies; 2) prayer texts (euchological texts) among which the texts of minor and major euchology<sup>20</sup> are distinguished; 3) non-euchological texts (others), which include some antiphonies, some greetings and answers, calls, exhortations and others.

When asked about the motives for building homilies from the above-mentioned euchological texts that constitute the main interest in this article, it is worth answering that the fundamental reason in this respect is the fact that these texts belong primarily to the liturgy being performed. For they, thanks to the liturgical context in which they are applied, are characterised by the causative dynamics of the mystery celebrated in a given rite. Therefore, no word of an individual prayer should escape our attention but should influence the content of our spiritual experience, as well as intensify and revive the faithful salvific encounter with God and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Thus, for example, when approaching things, an anaclysis, or invocation, “God who...” must be accompanied by the pure and deepened faith in God

<sup>17</sup> DH 20.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* (hereinafter: VD), 30.09.2010, no. 29.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>20</sup> Major euchology is the whole Eucharistic prayer in the Mass, while minor euchology is constituted by the collect, prayers over gifts and prayers after communion. See: M. Augé, *Tekst euchologiczny*, [in:] *Liturgia w podstawowych formach wyrazu*, serie: *Kościół w trzecim tysiącleciu*, vol. 9, A. Żądło (ed.), Katowice 2011, pp. 136–149; cf. H.J. Sobeczko, *Metody interpretacji tekstów liturgicznych*, [in:] *Ratio et revelatio. Z refleksji filozoficzno-teologicznych. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Księdzu Profesorowi Józefowi Herbutowi z okazji 65. rocznicy urodzin*, J. Cichoń (ed.), Opole 1998, p. 231.

as shown to us (almost “defined,” if one can express it in this way) in a given euchological, faith in a living encounter during the liturgy with the God. Also, the request “make it happen...” must be harmonised with the faith (not just a purely human attitude) that God remains open to our needs presented to Him, that He can give us what is necessary for salvation and what we ask Him for. We ought to convince the participants of the liturgy to all this in a homily. The faith and the resulting conviction that performing a given ritual means not only recalling the past in the spirit of a linear understanding of time but above all anamnesis<sup>21</sup> should be inspired in the participants through the homily. For a liturgical rite is a reminder of the salvific mysteries<sup>22</sup> in the sense that “what has once been done in a natural, historical way appears to us in a mystery.”<sup>23</sup> It is still a matter of presence experienced and read by faith, and not only of memory, to which, humanly speaking, a person living “here and now.” While for those who look at the liturgy from the outside, it is about memory, for those who participate in it with a mature faith, it is about the presence of the saving Lord and about communicating such His presence.<sup>24</sup>

In the liturgy that makes present what it means, it is not only a matter of “listening carefully” to the words spoken by a lector, deacon or priest, but of permeating them by faith and praying with them, of making them the content of one’s prayer establishing real communion. The latter, while entering into personal contact with the Lord, who acts salvifically “here and now,” is truly present and realises His mystery. A homily should help us in maturing to all this<sup>25</sup>

## Tools and methods necessary to build a homily

According to what has been said above, the basic “building blocks” for constructing a homily are the content of the liturgical mystery with its theology that is lived and manifested by readings and other texts.<sup>26</sup> This liturgical-theological nature of the homily requires that on the one hand it is entrusted exclusively to

<sup>21</sup> M. Kunzler, *Liturgia Kościoła*, serie: *Amateca: Podręczniki teologii katolickiej*, vol. 10, translated and devedped by L. Balter, Poznań 1999, p. 110.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. O. Casel, *Das christliche Opfermysterium. Zur Morphologie und Theologie des eucharistischen Hochgebets*, Graz–Wien–Köln–Styria 1968, pp. 487 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. ibidem.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka tekstów euchologicznych w służbie przepowiadania liturgicznego*, “Roczniki Teologiczne” 62 (2015), no. 12, p. 97.

<sup>26</sup> See: W. Świerzawski, *Mała metoda głoszenia homilii*, “Anamnesis” 10 (1996/97), no. 3, p. 71.



persons ordained to preside over<sup>27</sup> the liturgy, namely those authorised to spread, reflect, and, if necessary, correct the faith of the Church.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, the liturgical and theological nature of the homily demands that it be correctly and thoroughly prepared with the use of appropriate tools and methods.

Thanks to the living lecture we are dealing with in the homily, both the proclamation of the word of God and the liturgical rituals of the Church, which are inseparable from prayer texts (there is no ritual without a longer or shorter prayer text), can become more effective if the homily grows out of fruitful meditation and is well prepared in the process of building it up using appropriate tools and methods.<sup>29</sup>

### Preparing a homily using the *lectio divina* method

This *Homiletic Directory* outlines before the preachers a certain path to follow in the homily preparatory stage, which, as the document states, is to identify with the reflection on the meaning of the readings and prayers of a given liturgical celebration in the light of the mystery it commemorates.<sup>30</sup>

On this path, there are certain stages, identical to those proposed by the so-called *lectio divina*, which consists of reading (*lectio*), meditation (*meditatio*), prayer (*oratio*) and contemplation (*contemplatio*).<sup>31</sup> This method, based on four pillars, “grows out of a patristic exegesis of the spiritual meaning of Scripture.”<sup>32</sup> The great masters of its spiritual interpretation were the Fathers of the Church, who were mostly pastors; in their writings, there are often explanations of the word of God, which they gave people during the liturgy.<sup>33</sup> This method has been developed over the centuries by the monks and nuns who have been contemplating the Scripture in prayer throughout their lives.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, *Redemptionis sacramentum*, 25.03.2004, no. 161.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. DH 6.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. DH 10; WLM 24.

<sup>30</sup> See: DH 15.

<sup>31</sup> See: DH 29–35; cf. VD 87; EG 152.

<sup>32</sup> DH 27.

<sup>33</sup> See: DH 25.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. DH 27.

## The need to use hermeneutical methods in homiletical creativity

Following on from the mentioned Church Fathers, monks and nuns, as well as using the methods known today and commonly used, we want to draw attention to how a person preparing a homily for a specific liturgical celebration can reach the content of the texts used in the liturgy of the day. This method is identified with hermeneutical methods in homiletical creativity.

When we talk about such methods, we mean the techniques of reflecting on the chosen texts and explaining them to the liturgical participants. More broadly speaking, hermeneutical methods align themselves with the art of penetrating the historical context of the creation of a given text, i.e. its history, as well as the sense hidden in it. Detecting both elements makes it possible to understand better the message (content) that the text contains within and carries with it, as well as to communicate it adequately to the faithful gathered in the celebration of the liturgy. Under the term “hermeneutics,” we understand the art of listening to what a text says to us, as well as translating it and explaining it to the listeners.<sup>35</sup>

In our case, we could mean discovering the richness contained in the texts from various books, such as the lectionary, missal or any ritual (ritual book), as all texts intended for the liturgy celebration can be subject to homiletic creativity, as we have indicated above. However, our attention is focused only on euchological texts, because the study intends to contribute to the popularisation of methods for analysing such texts, although these methods are known to belong to linguistics, and we borrowed them from the Biblical studies that use them to interpret the Scripture. The focus on euchology is the reason why we leave aside many of the hermeneutical methods<sup>36</sup> known and used today,

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. A. Bronk, *Hermeneutyka*, [in:] *Encyklopedia katolicka* (hereinafter: EK), vol. 6, col. 770.

<sup>36</sup> For example, it is worth mentioning that Herbert Simon refers in the above-mentioned article to a two-volume work entitled *Mit der Kirche beten* (Stuttgart 1978) by Anton Bauer and Heribert Feifel (vol. 1: *Betrachtungen zu den Tagesgebeten der Sonntage im Jahreskreis*; vol. 2: *Betrachtungen zu den Tagesgebeten der Festtage und Festzeiten*), to stress that it contains numerous practical hermeneutical guidelines for the preacher, and thus a certain hermeneutic method of working on prayer texts in the preparation of the homily. Those authors emphasise in this work that for an effective homiletical use of a given euchological text it is necessary to know: 1) when, in what period of the Church's life the analysed text was created; 2) in the context of what period it is currently used; 3) what the structure of the text and its main theological message are; 4) what the Church's request and what is the Church's inclination to pray are; 5) what the existential value of the analysed prayer is (see: *Teksty liturgiczne...*, op. cit., p. 181).

and take on the historical-critical and linguistic ones<sup>37</sup> since they seem to be a tool which is, by all means, useful in preparing a homily – an essential and responsible activity – based on prayer texts, analogous to biblical texts.<sup>38</sup>

### Preparing homilies using methods specific to liturgical hermeneutics

The methods indicated in the title of this section, whether possible or applicable in building homilies based on euchological texts, are not mentioned in the *Homiletic Directory*. The *Directory* explicitly mentions that “the homily [is] the explanation of the word of the Holy Scripture (...) or some liturgical text.”<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the question arises why it does not do so or at least why it does not mention the possibility or even the necessity of using the methods already developed by the liturgical hermeneutics and applied by it to analyse liturgical texts to build homilies based on euchology. The *Directory* even points to something even more significant, namely it reminds us that the homily must be well prepared each time by submitting to appropriate and fruitful meditation.<sup>40</sup> The latter as the fruit of which is to be the homily, as well as its direct preparation ought to be carried out according to a key, a certain pattern, i.e., an established and deliberately chosen order, even a rigour, if one wants to avoid the danger of the so-called “daydreaming” (instead of thinking) or wasting

<sup>37</sup> These methods and the way of their practical application to the analysis of euchological texts are presented and illustrated with concrete examples [in:] A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka w badaniach nad formułami modlitw...*, op. cit., pp. 81–113. Cf. idem, *Eklezjologiczny wymiar kolekt Adwentu w Mszałe rzymskim Pawła VI. Studium lingwistyczno-teologiczne*, Kraków 2002, pp. 8–14; idem, *Hermeneutyka tekstów euchologicznych w kluczu diachronicznym i synchronicznym*, “Studia Theologica Varsaviensia” 49 (2011), no. 1, pp. 88–94; idem, „*Lex orandi – lex credendi*” w modlitwach nad darami Adwentu w Mszałe Pawła VI. Studium hermeneutyczno-liturgiczne, serie: *Kościół w trzecim tysiącleciu*, vol. 11, Katowice 2013, pp. 11–16.

<sup>38</sup> The proposal to base on euchological texts during the preparation of homilies, while using the hermeneutical methods mentioned above, seems understandable in view of the wealth of methods or models of updating the word of God that we can apply when preparing a homily from biblical readings. The multiplicity of such models/methods is attested by the list drawn up and presented by the already mentioned Jan Twardy in *Aneksy* to his book *Aktualizacja słowa Bożego w kaznodziejstwie* (see: pp. 400–419). Although the author suggests that in the relevant *Aneksy* he is referring to models useful in the work on the “sermon,” the presentation of these models, and sometimes even the titles that some of them are provided with, shows that they are also designed to prepare a “homily.”

<sup>39</sup> DH 10.

<sup>40</sup> This reminder is formulated in the *Directory* following WLM 24. Cf. DH 10.

precious time (instead of using it creatively to prepare what needs to be done). Thus, both the meditation and the other links in the preparation process should be guided by a precise, well-established method of conduct, creating a chance to achieve the intended goal.

The *Directory* suggests which method can be chosen to meditate on the Bible texts (i.e. the readings provided by the lectionary on a given day) to prepare a homily on their foundation. It is appropriate to use the method of *lectio divina*, as pointed out by Pope Francis<sup>41</sup> in the document under discussion. However, the inevitable question arises of the choice of the method for work on the euchological texts when preparing the homily based on them? The *Directory* does not provide the answer to such a question. Therefore, someone could suggest that the *lectio divina* method can be employed here as well.

Even though such a suggestion is challenging to be unequivocally opposed, it is evident that this method cannot be adapted in its pure form to euchological formulas, since it is “one of the ways of reading the Scripture, [leading] to a better knowledge of God and His saving plans in Jesus Christ, also in relation to our personal lives.”<sup>42</sup>

*Lectio divina* (which means “reading God’s word”) (...) is the individual or collective reading [and meditation] of a slightly longer passage of the Scripture as the word of God, which takes place because of a particular movement by the Holy Spirit, and which goes into meditation, prayer and contemplation.<sup>43</sup>

Such reading of a passage of the Scripture is, therefore, a sacred message written in text form under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.<sup>44</sup> The euchological formulas do not have this category (inspired texts), although they are inherently sacred, as composed for the sacred liturgy, and their use in the liturgy is sacred, they appear to us as texts created by extra-biblical authors, though often inspired by the Bible.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Cf. EG 152.

<sup>42</sup> T. Trzaskawka, *Wprowadzenie w praktykę „lectio divina”*, <http://mateusz.pl/mt/lectio/ts.asp> [access: 19.05.2018].

<sup>43</sup> Papal Biblical Commission, *Interpretacja Pisma Świętego w Kościele*, April 15, 1993, Polish translation Poznań 1994, p. 106. Cf. *Leksykon liturgii*, term: “*Lectio divina*,” developed by B. Nadolski, Poznań 2006, pp. 724, 725; J. Kudasiewicz, B. Szier-Kramarek, *Lectio divina*, part 2, EK, vol. 10, col. 629, 630.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. L. Pacomio, *Lectio divina. Accostarsi alla Bibbia, leggere, meditare, pregare, contemplare, amare*, Casale Monferrato 1986, p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. K. Konecki, *Zasady interpretacji tekstów euchologicznych*, “Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 46 (1993), no. 3–4, p. 178.

The difference between the two types of texts used in the liturgy (biblical and euchological) stems above all from the fact that biblical texts belong to the canon of books considered to be inspired by the Church. In contrast, euchological texts form an open catalogue of texts, which is still supplemented due to the vital character of the liturgy, for example, the dynamics of worship of the saints, as well as other transformations that take place in liturgical celebrations during the Church year. Euchological texts, therefore, are distinguished from biblical texts by their authorship, as well as the context and purpose of their composition: they are edited by the Church to express the mystery of its worship while considering the socio-cultural conditions of the congregation that uses them.<sup>46</sup>

The *lectio divina* method is applicable to Mass prayers in a model sense. It means that it can be modelled on in an inspiring way, but ultimately the methods typical of liturgical hermeneutics should be used. These teach that for a careful examination of euchological texts, an in-depth study of their contents, extracting and announcing to the people gathered in the liturgy a message coming from them, it is necessary to analyse them above all in a diachronic and synchronous key.<sup>47</sup> The diachronic key is a matter of recognising what kind of text we are dealing with, whether it is taken from one of the ancient sacramentaries, composed in the times closer to us, or perhaps even in the modern, post-conciliar period. It is first and foremost a matter of knowing what path through time (*día chrónos*) the prayers used today in the liturgy (which form a building block for the homily being prepared) have taken, what attitude to biblical (or perhaps patristic) texts or to ecclesiastical documents they have had, and whether the texts have inspired them.

The historical-critical method for obtaining such information derives from a critical look at a given text, and the attempt to reconstruct its origins and history up to its final editing (hence it is called diachronic).<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless, it does not determine the interdependence of individual elements of the prayer formula to enter deeper into its theological richness. Therefore, the synchronic approach to euchological texts – especially the use of the linguistic method<sup>49</sup> – is

<sup>46</sup> See: *ibidem*, p. 176.

<sup>47</sup> To imagine and assimilate how to proceed with the analysis of euchological formulas in a diachronic and synchronous key, cf. *Aneks* to the article by A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka w badaniach nad formułami modlitw...*, *op. cit.*, entitled *Metody, jakimi warto postugiwać się w hermeneutyce liturgicznej* (pp. 104–112).

<sup>48</sup> See: A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka tekstów euchologicznych...*, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, p. 90. See: J. Czerski, *Metody interpretacji Nowego Testamentu*, serie: *Opolska Biblioteka Teologiczna*, vol. 21, Opole 1997, p. 69.

required. It makes it possible to see coherent literary units in them and opens the way to the reading of their meaning and the content associated with the celebrated mystery.<sup>50</sup>

### Model significance of *lectio divina* for homiletic creativity based on euchological texts explored by historical-critical and linguistic methods

We have noted above that, according to the *Homiletic Directory* studied, the fundamental pillars on which the reading of the Holy Scripture with benefit and in the spirit of faith by *lectio divina* is based include *lectio* (reading the text), *meditatio* (meditating the text), *oratio* (praying with the text) and *contemplatio* (contemplation). In 1993, the Pontifical Biblical Commission recalled it in a document dedicated to the interpretation of the Sacred Scripture in the Church,<sup>51</sup> as did Benedict XVI, who called this practice of *lectio divina* a prayerful reading in the Holy Spirit, opening to the faithful the treasure of God's word and leading to an encounter with Christ, the living Word of God.<sup>52</sup> In the minor study on the *lectio divina* method, which was published as early as 1986, Luciano Pacomio, enriches the mentioned above necessary four steps for its implementation with two others.

The first of these stages, as if foresighted, indicates the need to get closer to the Bible. It is to realise each time – what we are dealing with in the process of preparing the homily – the importance of the Scripture we make the object of our prayerful treatment, pay attention to the book of that Scripture from which the fragment analysed and meditated comes, see the context in which the sacred text to which we devote our time and prayerful concentration appears.<sup>53</sup> Pacomio identifies the second concluding, or instead consistently completing the four steps of the *lectio divina* method, stage with the attitude of love practised in life, which is the fruit of reading and meditating on a chosen biblical text, as

<sup>50</sup> See: J. Czernski, *Metodologia Nowego Testamentu*, Opolska Biblioteka Teologiczna, vol. 126, Opole 2012, p. 89.

<sup>51</sup> See: Papieska Komisja Biblijna, *Interpretacja Pisma Świętego...*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Orędzie końcowe Synodu Biskupów do ludu Bożego *Słowo Boże w historii*, part 2, "L'Osservatore Romano" 1 (2009), Polish edition, p. 28. Also see: VD 87.

<sup>53</sup> See: the chapter entitled *Accostarsi alla Bibbia*, [in:] L. Pacomio, *Lectio divina...*, op. cit., pp. 9–18. Some point out at this stage the need to meet the so-called preliminary assumptions, which are indispensable for the *lectio divina* method to be effective (cf. A. Szustak, *Lectio divina*, <https://stacja7.pl/wiara/lectio-divina/> [access: 12.02.2019]).

well as prayer and contemplation inspired by it. XVI did alike when recalling “that the *lectio divina* in its dynamics does not end until it leads to an action (*actio*) that makes the life of the believer a gift to others in love.”<sup>54</sup>

The same should apply to euchological texts. When the effort to prepare a homily concentrates on one of them, we should, following the essence of the *lectio divina* method and its example, subject the studied text to a synchronic analysis, which in practice means going through certain stages of behaviour. They are suggested by a useful linguistic method that involves action aimed at achieving the desired goal: 1) syntactic, 2) semantic and 3) pragmatic analysis of the chosen text.

Moving on to the syntactic analysis, it is necessary to make an inventory of the words (a lexicon of the text under examination), determine the parts of speech and grammatical forms, examine the structure of sentences and the way they are combined, characterise the style and, finally, divide the text.<sup>55</sup> In the case of semantic analysis, the meaning of individual words, phrases, syntactic relations, and whole sentences is examined depending on the context in which they occur. Besides, an answer is sought to the question of what a given text expresses and how to understand its individual phrases and sentences.<sup>56</sup> The pragmatic analysis examines the communicative functions of a text, since its task (like that of spoken language) is, by its very nature, communication. The text conveys to the recipient some content which, in the case of prayer formulas, is identified with the message being announced to him.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, it is advisable that coping with the reading of the message be accompanied by the anticipation of prayer. It is the awareness that one is dealing with a prayer formula, the carrier and instrument of that communication that occurs between God (the source of the message) and the praying liturgical assembly (the recipient of the message).<sup>58</sup>

The whole procedure described here demands – as in the case of *lectio divina* – two additional stages, the first of which, as if precedent, puts before the preacher who prepares the homily based on the euchological text the need to get closer to it, thereby get acquainted with its broader context. The diachronic study of the text, which demands – as we have indicated above – that it be subjected to a historical-critical analysis, provides a chance to do

<sup>54</sup> VD 87.

<sup>55</sup> In the *lectio divina* method we are dealing with *lectio* at this stage.

<sup>56</sup> In the *lectio divina* method we are dealing with *meditatio* at this stage.

<sup>57</sup> In the *lectio divina* method we are dealing with *contemplatio* at this stage.

<sup>58</sup> In the *lectio divina* method, the *contemplatio* stage is preceded by the stage reserved for *oratio*.

so. The preacher who is leaning over the chosen text asks what it – the text that the Church uses today, during a concrete liturgical celebration when the prepared homily will be preached – *de facto* is. He, therefore, realises first that he is dealing with the Church's euchological heritage, that he happens to take an interest in one or more specific texts of prayers based on which he begins preparing his homily. Hence, he asks about their sources, takes a critical look at their content and structure, and finds traces of the inspiring influence of the Bible and, perhaps, of one of the Fathers of the Church, Christian writers, popes or Church documents.

The second of the mentioned additional stages, concluding or – as we have called it above – completing individual steps of hermeneutical conduct, should – similarly to the introduction of the word of God (*actio*) in the method of *lectio divina* – sensitise the participants of the liturgy to its obliging character. It should, therefore, remind us that the acceptance of the sacramental gift that each type of liturgy gives us, entails a commitment to such conduct (to *actio*) which, at the end of the ritual event, identifies with the existential response to this sacramental gift, a response that confirms the similarity of the liturgical participants to Christ.<sup>59</sup>

The table below outlines, in parallel rows and at the corresponding levels, the individual links in the process of working on a homily based on biblical readings (left column) or on euchological texts, that is, on prayer formulas (right column) of a given liturgical celebration.

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. S. Czerwik, *Duchowość Eucharystii*, "Anamnesis" 42 (2005), no. 3, p. 61; M. Pastuszko, *Pojęcie Najświętszej Eucharystii (kan. 897)*, "Prawo Kanoniczne" 48 (2005), no. 3–4, p. 28.



<b>Homily Preparation</b>	
<b>Based on biblical texts</b>	<b>Based on euchological texts</b>
<b>Preliminary stage (anticipatory)</b>	
<p><b>Getting closer to the Bible:</b> It is about realising what we are coping with during our homily preparation, namely the importance of the Scripture that we make the subject of our prayerful treatment, the book of that Scripture from which we analyse and meditate, the context in which the sacred text to which we devote our time and prayerful focus is found.</p>	<p><b>Getting closer to the euchological text and becoming acquainted with its context:</b> It is about becoming aware of what euchology is, what place it occupies in the Church's liturgy and how it is shared. It also concerns the historical and literary richness of the texts studied, as well as their contextuality. Often, a given euchological text is treated too cursory by preachers.<sup>60</sup> That is because it is used during the homily without prior getting close to it, getting familiar with it, and realising that it is: 1) each euchological text belongs to a group of literary texts and therefore constitutes a certain code of content which must be deciphered with the application of appropriate tools even before the homily is delivered; 2) each of them constitutes a sacred text because it is sanctified by its use in the sacred liturgy – either for centuries (in the case of texts belonging to the ancient liturgical tradition) or for more recent times (in the case of texts still created for the use of constantly living liturgy). It is therefore important to pay attention to the liturgical sources of the text (historicity) and to the inspiring influence of the Bible or one of the patristic-ecclesial works (contextuality) in the process of the homily preparation.<sup>61</sup></p>
Stages of proceedings in the <i>lectio divina</i> method	Stages of proceedings in the linguistic method

<sup>60</sup> It happens that preachers approach euchological texts as the so-called obvious ones, i.e. they quote their fragments or single words as slogans – on principle “as a given fragment or word of the text states” – as if that fragment or expression had a mark of interpretation. In homily preaching, based on euchological texts, one can sense a lack of effort put by preachers to justify why a given fragment or word of the text states so and not otherwise. Thus, the homily with presented historical and literary arguments and linguistic ones lacks endeavour to substantiate them.

<sup>61</sup> The above mentioned historical and literary arguments are gained using the historical-critical method. It is necessary first to discern the origin of the text, thus look at its genesis

**Reading the Bible text (*lectio*):**

At this stage, the activity of the intellect is to be stimulated, as reading a specific text arouses the desire to know its contents authentically: it is about discovering what the Bible text under study says. The stage consists, in a way, in "weighing" each word of the text, thereby trying to understand it in the context of other words. A skilfully conducted reading of a biblical text creates an opportunity to go beyond the circle of one's thinking.<sup>62</sup>

**Syntactic reading of the euchological text:**

What we have pointed out above indicates how significant it is to know about the diachronicity of a euchological text before reading it. If we have such knowledge, we should proceed to decipher the data related to the content code of the text, and thus to read it in a linguistic (semiotic<sup>63</sup>) key. The first of three steps to be taken in the key is directed at the syntactic richness of the text, thus studying it from the linguistic side. Such an examination consists of establishing the lexicon of the text (the so-called word inventory), determining the parts of speech and grammatical forms occurring in it, learning the structure of sentences and the way they are combined, separating the segments from which the text is made up (i.e. the so-called literary units), as well as describing its general structure.<sup>64</sup>

and history up to the contemporary editing (hence it is called the diachronic method), as well as become aware of the literary changes and corrections introduced to some texts. It is also worthwhile to be aware, before entering the pulpit, of what could be inspiring sources for a given euchological text, i.e. which biblical, patristic or other text could inspire the author of a given prayer text to compose it for a given circumstance. Such an approach to an euchological text allows the preacher to analyse it critically, establish its theological lines (accents) and get closer to the environment of its creation. If this happens, it is possible to speak of kind of amalgamation of the text made the basis for preparing the homily.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. VD 87.

<sup>63</sup> Semiotics (*sēmeiōtikòs* – concerning the sign) is a general theory of the sign including syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics. Semiotics deals with the problem of typology of various characters and varieties of signs, their essence, and the role they play in the process of human communication; see: *Słownik wyrazów obcych*, J. Tokarski (ed.), Warsaw 1972, p. 675.

<sup>64</sup> See: A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka tekstów euchologicznych...*, op. cit., p. 91; H. Langkammer, *Metody lingwistyczne*, [in:] *Metodologia Nowego Testamentu*, idem (ed.), Pelplin 1994, pp. 249–252; J. Czernski, *Metody interpretacji...*, op. cit., pp. 125–131; H.J. Sobeczko, *Metody interpretacji...*, op. cit., pp. 234–235; D.J. Sadowski, *Teologia uroczystości Narodzenia Pańskiego w świetle euchologii Mszału rzymskiego Pawła VI. Hermeneutyczne studium liturgicznoteologiczne* (typescript of the doctorate), Opole 2014, p. 36.

<p><b>Consideration of the text (<i>meditatio</i>):</b> At this stage, we ask ourselves: what does a given biblical text tell us, how it speaks to us? Here, everyone should allow himself or herself to be confronted with this question, because <i>meditatio</i> is not about meditating on words spoken in the past, but those that still speak to us – even at present.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, it is a matter of knowing with the heart, namely accepting and retaining the word of God in our hearts, and living this word in us. Only then is it possible to confront our thoughts, words and deeds with the content that the meditated word of God brings into our lives.</p>	<p><b>Semantic reading of the euchological text:</b> Knowing a lot about the text, we move on to its semantic reading, which is nothing more than a kind of meditation since it is about penetrating the meaning of individual words, phrases and entire syntactic relationships. Answers to questions of what a text expresses and how to understand its phrases and sentences are sought. The aim of this stage is, therefore, to establish the meaning of individual words/phrases (lexemes), i.e. lexical units, depending on the context in which they occur, and to reproduce the lines of meaning contained in the text.<sup>66</sup></p>
<p><b>Prayer (<i>oratio</i>):</b> At this stage of using the <i>lectio divina</i> method, a prayer arises from the question: what answer will I give to God to the word he has given me, what should I say to him? This prayerful answer can be expressed in the form of a request, intercession, thanksgiving, or praise to God. It is a privileged way for God Himself to transform me through His word.<sup>67</sup></p>	<p><b>Praying the content of the euchological text:</b> Even at this stage of the use of the linguistic (semiotic) method, prayer is necessary. The necessity stems from the fact that the prayer formula, which we analyse in the homily preparation, allows us to influence ourselves, to be permeated by the intensity of its content and to surrender to it, and thus to establish contact with God, to whom we turn with its help. Thus, we approach the analysed prayer formula not only technically (like the subject of a linguistic operation). First, we pray for it – we recognise it profoundly and, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, sensitise participants of the liturgy in the homily to this mystery, which is commemorated by them – as the local Church, thus emphasising the essence of the mystery being celebrated. It becomes present thanks to the ritual sign (formed by <i>res et gesta</i>) with the word (<i>verbum</i>) of the prayer – according to the Augustinian principle: <i>accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum</i>.<sup>68</sup></p>

<sup>65</sup> Cf. VD 87.

<sup>66</sup> See: A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka tekstów euchologicznych...*, op. cit., pp. 92–93; D.J. Sadowski, *Teologia uroczystości Narodzenia Pańskiego w świetle euchologii...*, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. VD 87.

<sup>68</sup> Augustine, *In Evangelium Joannis Tractatus* 80,3: PL 35,1840.

**Contemplation (*contemplatio*):**

Finally, the *lectio divina* ends with contemplation, in which we accept, as a gift from God, his gaze when evaluating reality and ask ourselves: what conversion of mind, heart and life does the Lord want from us?<sup>69</sup> This fourth stage (*contemplatio*) is like the second one (*meditatio*), but the difference lies in the way we engage. If, in the meditation stage, I am somewhat active and confront my own life with the word of God I know, then in the contemplation stage I remain rather passive, which means that I allow God to confront me with my word. In this way, I become a participant in the perfect encounter with God through His word, which consists in anchoring the spirit in God, tasting the joy of eternal sweetness.<sup>70</sup>

**Pragmatic reading of the euchological text:**

At this stage, we move on to examine and demonstrate the communicative function of the text, as its primary purpose is to provide us with specific content. Pragmatics, like semantics (the second stage of analysis), deals with determining the meaning of the statement contained in the text, especially those aspects that are not considered by semantic theory. Besides the meaning of words, it deals with capturing intentions of a given statement to sensitise it to dynamics with which its purpose of existence is identified. The meaning of a text depends on the intention the author wanted to express in concrete conditions of communication with the interlocutor. It is known that no text is ever definitively finished, closed, and belonging only to history. Hence the characteristic feature of each text is that it speaks to us "here and now," evokes vivid reactions, and confronts us with the author's intentions.<sup>71</sup> The author of euchological texts is the Church that "expresses" through them the richness of faith that is stored and spread in the world and communicates with God. Therefore, it expects our appropriate attention, analytical meditation, i.e., contemplation that opens us up to God and allows Him to act in us and in our lives.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. VD 87.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. L. Mateja, *Pięć najważniejszych etapów czytania Pisma*, <https://www.deon.pl/religia/duchowosc-i-wiara/slowo-boze/art,75,5-najwazniejszych-etapow-czytania-pisma.html> [access: 13.02.2019].

<sup>71</sup> See: A. Żądło, *Hermeneutyka tekstów euchologicznych...*, op. cit., pp. 93, 94; D.J. Sadowski, *Teologia uroczystości Narodzenia Pańskiego w świetle euchologii...*, op. cit., p. 36.

<b>Complementary stage</b>	
<p><b>Introducing the word of God (<i>actio</i>) into action:</b>  <i>Lectio divina</i> in its dynamics does not end until it leads to an action that makes the life of the believer a gift to others in love.<sup>72</sup></p>	<p><b>Fruitful participation in the liturgy</b>  Also, the liturgy does not finish in a vacuum when a given liturgical assembly is dissolved. Participation in every kind of it must be fruitful. It becomes the more necessary to realise this truth when one recalls that the liturgy is characterised by a binding dimension, which means that participation in a given rite has moral consequences in life. The sacramental grace we ask God for during the liturgy, for which we also thank Him and adore Him, is not only God's gift but also, at the same time, the task that man should put into practice in his daily life. Such awareness and reminder cannot be absent from any homily.</p>

## Pastoral conclusion

In one of his exhortations, Benedict XVI put forward the thesis that “preaching the word of God with proper reference to the lectionary is (...) art to be cultivated.”<sup>73</sup> Some homiletical studies, which declare that “a homily is an art and – like any art – depends on the performer”<sup>74</sup> support that thesis. *The Homiletic Directory* also breathes such a spirit; hence it follows unambiguously that the proclamation of a homily, and its preparation, should be regarded as a kind of artistry. It demands from the preacher a minimum of appropriate abilities and a readiness to put effort into preparing the homily with the use of appropriate tools and methods.

The homily, which is prepared for a given liturgical celebration, is like a painting on canvas that speaks and delights us with its artistry. Before such a painting is created, its idea – often under the influence of an external or internal impulse – is born in the artist's mind, then it is gradually transferred onto the canvas using appropriate brushes and paints that are appropriate in terms of colour and quality. They applied to the canvas in a given way, i.e. using the method of creation proper to a given work.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. VD 87.

<sup>73</sup> VD 60.

<sup>74</sup> See: J. Chmiel, *Geneza i charakter homilii sakramentalnej*, “Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 36 (1983), no. 1, p. 24.

The philosophy of creation, i.e. preparation for preaching the homily, is subject to the same principle in practice. Under the impulse of the content of the texts<sup>75</sup> of a given liturgical celebration, we begin to extract from them, using appropriate methods/analytical tools, a message that belongs to the sacramentally commemorated/present mystery. The *Homiletic Directory* suggests employing the *lectio divina* method when building a homily on the foundation of texts from the lectionary. However, neither does it not mention nor advise what method can be used in work on the homily composed from euchological texts. Nevertheless, it assumes – in the spirit of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council – the equivalence of such texts in homily proclamation with the biblical ones, and even clearly emphasises that the proclamation of the word of God can be made not only with proper reference to the lectionary (Benedict XVI articulated the thought in the mentioned exhortation) but also to the whole euchological corpus.

This lack of a clear suggestion in the *Directory* was a stimulus for the development of this publication, for which the latter aspect (building homilies from euchological texts) determined the framework of the research field. The article that closes with this pastoral conclusion aims to present a contribution to sharpening especially – but not exclusively – in priests and deacons (for they are the subject of homily preaching) the awareness that they function in the liturgical space. Furthermore, hermeneutical methods (taken from linguistics and commonly used in biblical studies), which may be useful in the process of preparing the homily under consideration based on prayer texts, are to be applied. These texts – it is worth emphasising this to justify their assignment to the liturgical hermeneutics – do not belong to the canon of inspired texts (like the liturgical readings taken from the Bible), but they are holy by nature, because they are composed for the sacred liturgy, and their use in the liturgy is sanctified.

The pool of hermeneutical methods is extensive. In the article, we have drawn attention to the historical-critical method, which is used to study the diachronicity and contextuality of texts, and the linguistic (semiotic) method that allows discovering their synchronous richness. We have also juxtaposed the main assumptions of these methods and the parallel steps in the *lectio divina* method, suggested – as it seems – by the discussed directory as the only one and thus a universal method for all homily preachers.

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<sup>75</sup> We use the phrase “for example,” because the homily can also be, as we have indicated above, prepared and delivered based on symbols, gestures, attitudes, actions, material things, or silence.

Opting for the universality of one method in the process of preparing the homily seems to favour the more mediocre version of this process since the homily – as we stressed above – is an art dependent on the performer. It often happens that different representatives of the same art genre create their works using “own,” i.e., their chosen, favourite, personally developed or preferred method. Therefore, the author of this article intended to provoke preachers to reflect on which methods they employ in their work on building homilies addressed to the faithful at least every Sunday and which one they could use to make their work effective and bring better and better results in the form of opening the faithful to the message God wishes to communicate through a given liturgical rite to its participants.

Unfortunately, it is frequently the case that those who preach a homily make its content what they consider crucial and essential. Therefore, they develop topics that they think are the most important to their contemporaries. They deal with one or other subject presented from extensive experience, general knowledge or situation. They do not try, however, to give the proclamation of the homily a model that effectively extracts and transmits the message that is saturated with the whole structure of the liturgy, all its texts, especially the ones of specific prayers, abundantly chosen not to protect us from monotony during the liturgy, but because of the enormity and importance of the content of the mystery being exercised, which God wants to communicate to all peoples through the wisdom of the Church’s Tradition, so that the inhabitants of the farthest corners of the world may have access to salvation and not only listen to more or less thrilling content. Hence, the desired result of this article is to pay more attention to the eucharological texts of a given liturgical rite and to build a homily on them.

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