

The Rev. William A. Toohey, C.S.C.

Notre Dame Preaching Academy

*Renewing preachers to
revitalize the Church*

 **MARTEN PROGRAM**
in Homiletics and Liturgics



*Would you like to
be more effective in
your preaching?*

*Are you looking to
preach so that your
parishioners encounter
the living God?*

*Would you like to
renew your spiritual
life so that your
preaching goes deeper?*

*Come and join us in
the Notre Dame
Preaching Academy!*

Why focus on preaching?



“The homily can actually be an intense and happy experience of the Spirit, a consoling encounter with God’s word, a constant source of renewal and growth.”

—Pope Francis,
Evangelii Gaudium #108

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis encourages us to find joy in preaching. His example has refocused the Church on the vital role of the homily in the evangelization of the modern world. It is a great act of love for a preacher to offer a homily that touches hearts and meets the needs of his people.

Priests and deacons in the Notre Dame Preaching Academy deepen their own faith while learning how to better discern what their parishioners need to hear. They learn how to make their preaching more effective and engaging.

The University of Notre Dame’s Marten Program forms one cohort per year. The cohort consists of peer learning groups of priests or deacons from partnering dioceses. We seek preachers who passionately want to grow.

Why focus on preaching? We want our people to encounter God through the Sunday homily.

Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of
your faithful!



Refresh. Retreat. Renew.



Some of the 2017 cohort gather at the Notre Dame preaching conference.

In addition to monthly meetings in their home diocese, all program participants gather three times in the year. The first and last gatherings are held on the Notre Dame campus. In the winter, we meet somewhere warm.

In our work with priests, many express how weary they get. Priests have said that the need to be “fresh” every week can feel like a burden. The goal of these three gatherings is to help priests flourish in their homiletic ministry; personal spiritual renewal is essential to effective preaching.

Come away to enriching preaching events!

Msgr. Les Ivers

*Director of Ongoing Formation for Priests
2017 cohort, Archdiocese of New York City*

“My aim was to learn at the preaching conference, and I certainly did. I must say that I very much looked forward to preaching this past weekend and I did experience a renewed zeal in exercising this ministry. I hope that zeal continues in the weeks and months ahead.”

Fr. Vincent Druding

*Parochial Vicar, Church of the Assumption,
Peekskill, New York
2017 cohort, Archdiocese of New York City*

“I want to touch more hearts, more deeply. I want to hone my discipline and skills and knowledge as a preacher.”

Rev. Donald Baker

*Pastor of St. Monica, St. Elizabeth of
Hungary, and St. Stephen of Hungary
parish, New York City
2017 cohort, Archdiocese of
New York City*

“The preaching workshop was a very good experience to be with a group of brother priests who take preaching seriously and wish to grow in their ability to prepare and deliver a homily that will touch people’s hearts and hopefully change their lives. The concept of ‘encounter’ is fundamental and we certainly were given the opportunity to learn and practice the skills to do this.”



Fr. Bob Flickinger

*Pastor, Our Lady
of the Lake,
Edwardsburg, Michigan
2017 cohort, Diocese
of Kalamazoo
(Michigan)*

“The environment at the preaching retreat in Tampa, Florida, was peaceful and helped me to stay focused on my learning. The gathering of priests from different places added to the effectiveness of the process. The excellent presentations, the working in groups and the access to the talented presenters made the whole couple of days a blessing.”

How can you get involved?

The Notre Dame Preaching Academy partners with dioceses, to facilitate a group learning process for priests and deacons. (At this time, we do not accept individuals on their own.) If you are intrigued by this opportunity, talk to your bishop or ongoing formation office and have them contact us about forming a group.

Registration, food, and lodging for the conferences and workshops are fully funded by the Preaching Academy through a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment. Travel expenses are to be covered by the diocese.



Bishop Paul J. Bradley
*2017 cohort, Diocese
of Kalamazoo
(Michigan)*

“Entering into this process with a small group of our priests continues to energize and inspire me. Having three hours of prayerful and fraternal time together each month has been very enriching in my own spiritual life, and it has deepened the bond between me and the priests who are participating.

“The background materials that are provided for us are theologically sound and Scripturally stimulating. This has made me much more conscious of the great opportunity that preaching God’s word provides for me, and even more determined to do my very best to bring the joy of the Gospel to all.”

With your diocesan peer learning group, you will:

- Meet and pray together eight times in the fall and spring, once per month for reflection, evaluation, and support.
- Preach or bring a video of your preaching for group evaluation twice within that year.
- Give your group members substantive and helpful feedback for their preaching.
- Be well prepared for the discussion of those meetings with a brief reading/viewing and written reflection.
- Pray for each other’s preaching.

The peer learning group offers an opportunity for priestly/diaconal fraternity, an opportunity to grow together, and support one another in this ministry which is so important.

With your local parish:

- Let them know that you are participating in this process and what your goals are for your preaching.
- Set up a process to get parishioners’ input and feedback on your preaching.
- Ask for their prayers for you and your fellow preachers.

With the Marten Program:

- Record and send in or upload three videos for one-on-one coaching.
- Complete a personal preaching self-evaluation and a set of goals for the year.
- Commit to one year of intensive formation in preaching.

The preaching renewal process

The yearlong Preaching Academy integrates many types of learning:

- Orientation session.
- Monthly peer learning gatherings in your home diocese.
- Enrichment through reading and/or viewing of homilies with practical suggestions to try in your Sunday preaching.
- Personal coaching, both in person and via video conference.
- Two summer events that bookend the year — a preaching conference and a two-day workshop, both on the beautiful Notre Dame campus.
- A four-day winter preaching retreat in early January in a warm location, typically Florida.

Please note: The Notre Dame Preaching Academy provides ongoing formation in preaching and is not a degree-granting program. Other than the three “come-away” events, your diocesan group plans monthly meetings that work around your schedule at a centralized place close to home.



Father Jacob Koether

Parochial Vicar, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Yoakum, Texas

2018 cohort, Diocese of Victoria (Texas)

“The homily is more than just exegesis or entertainment. I want to get better at preaching, get more ideas, and try to make my preaching have more of an impact on people, beyond merely being interesting.”





For more information, please contact:

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Supporting and strengthening Catholic preaching.

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