

Are You Talking to Me?
A Study of Young Listeners' Connection with Catholic Sunday Preaching

Clergy Interview Questions

Introduction: I will start with the big picture of clergy life and then I will narrow to the specifics preaching and homily preparation, so the first questions are very broad. I have spent my life as a woman sitting in the pew. In order to learn how to connect the pulpit and the pew, I need to understand what your life is like. I hope that you can help me to do that.

1. In general, what do you want for your people?
2. What do you find most rewarding in your ministry? Why? What are those rewards?
3. When they come away from Mass, what do you want your people to take away with them?
4. What do you see as the role of the homily in creating that?
5. What is your part in that?
6. Other than “Good homily, Father,” what sort of feedback do you get on your preaching from people in the pew?
7. If you don’t get feedback, how do you know how you are doing? If you were to get feedback from people in the pew, what would be most helpful for you to hear?
8. How or when do clergy discuss preaching among themselves?
9. How do you keep your preaching fresh? How do you prepare?
10. (Describe the study of young listeners and what I am trying to accomplish in helping our Catholic Sunday preaching to better connect with our young people.) If I were to present the results of my study of young listeners, what style of continuing education would be effective in presenting this?
11. From your perspective, what would be the most effective means of helping you to improve your preaching?
12. Preaching preparation groups – have you used them? If so, how did they help? If not, what are the reasons that you have not?
13. Parish priests have many things to do. On a scale of zero to ten, zero (meaning not important) to ten (as the most important), how important is the preparation of your Sunday homily in terms of your time commitment? How important do you think your preparation is in the life of your parishioners?
14. Is there anything else that you would like to share about Catholic preaching?