

Homily – Installation of Lectors and Acolytes

Permanent Diaconate Candidates

October 19, 2013

My brothers and sisters, we are the pilgrim people of God, traveling on a journey of faith. Those of you in the permanent diaconate program are at a specific milestone in your pilgrimage – as you are installed as lectors or acolytes. You may already be familiar with the roles, but today you receive the **offices of lector and acolyte.**

Those who are receiving the Office of Lector are taking on a sacred responsibility for God’s people. This means that you must prepare carefully to read the word of God in the liturgical assembly. You are not reading a dictionary, a fairy tale, or a mystery story – you are reading the very word of God! -- the **living word of God spoken here and now! What is the message being conveyed? What is the point of the reading? Pray over the text. Meditate on it. Then proclaim it with confidence.**

St. Paul reminds us that being in a right relationship with one another and with God involves both faith and observance of God’s laws as found in Scripture, especially the law of love. Those who proclaim the word of God must also live by it—without exception!

Regarding the Office of Acolyte: It is important to know the rubrics and carry them out with dignity and care, not drawing attention to yourself but assisting in the prayer that draws the congregation into deeper communion with God. This means that you need to be fully present to God and the community. Prepare your mind and heart and your whole being for the celebration. It is up to us ministers to establish a prayerful environment. We are called to enter more fully into God's presence, proclaim our faith, listen to God's word, celebrate a sacrament – praise God, ask for God's forgiveness, thank God!

This implies that, as ministers of the word and the altar, our lives must be holy. We need to walk in God's ways throughout the week. We need to enter into the deep mystery of God's presence and action in our own lives. Jesus is our model: He proclaims the teaching of his heavenly Father faithfully, boldly, confident in the one who sent him into the world. He brings God's love to everyone he encounters. As we heard in the gospel, the Holy Spirit will guide us!

May Our Lady of Guadalupe help us so that we may proclaim God's word and serve his people with fidelity and great love!