

Sliding into Home: Ten Tips on How to Conclude a Homily

The best way to improve the way you conclude is to remember that a conclusion is not the same as a summary. Rather, a summary is more like a pilot landing a plane. At the end of the flight, the homilist strives to “touch down” with steady control and solid footing.

Here are ten suggestions gleaned from various authors as well as a few examples from my own files:

1. Use simple, direct statements.

*Your weakness:
mark it, move toward it;
with God’s help,
transform it.*

2. Reiterate, don’t obfuscate.

*Like a friend with an armload of wood,
God’s arms stay open:
“Thrown on another piece,” he says.
“go ahead, make it two!”*

3. Capitalize on rhythmic stress within words and phrases:

*You saw his face,
you heard his voice.
Despite your fear,*

you touched his scars.

4. Employ repetition.

*God is not a rock, not a stone.
God is love, endless love.*

5. Bait and Switch

*Religion doesn't start with being good.
It starts with being scared.*

6. Use direct address.

*God knows your name.
Michael. Hannah.
He knows the way it sounds.
Tonya. Thomas.
He loves the way it sounds.*

7. Complete a progression.

*Receive the Holy Spirit
Deep within.
Deep inside.*

8. Alter the image.

*He stoops to wash our feet...
and, in doing so,
He wipes our record clean.*

9. Accentuate with alliteration.

*The sacraments: Doors to Heaven!
Open them often!
Open them wide!*

10. End with a rhyme.

*We will plant the gospel seed.
We will harvest the grace we need.*