



Writing a Reflection

1. At the start of the week - read the readings

(When you are starting out, it is often easier to focus on the gospel. Later you might to ask yourself what is the common thread in each of the readings.)

Ask yourself:

- What stands out for you? Is there a word, phrase or idea that catches your attention?
- Does something surprise you or make you wonder?
- What feelings are aroused in you?
- Look at the context of the reading. It is often helpful to read what comes before and after your reading.
- You may like to write a few rough notes.

2. For several days when you have a spare minute - think about the reading and the thing that stood out for you.

- How does this relate to your experience of God, or of living your Christian life?
- How does this relate to current affairs, or news of the week?

Rev'd Ken Parker was recently awarded an OAM, and in an interview said, "I try to use my imagination when I am preparing a sermon, and I try to get people to think imaginatively, not to be pedestrian or rational in their thinking to bring their imaginations to bear."

3. What do others say about this reading?

- Look at one or two commentaries. I find Brendan Byrne's commentaries on each of the gospels very helpful. I also find Tom Wright's books useful.
- If using the internet choose reputable sites.
- How does what you have read fit in with your ideas? Note anything you might want to include but remember this is your reflection.

4. Mid-week if possible - put some ideas on paper.

- How will you catch your audience's interest? A personal story is often helpful. Some people use a joke or humorous story to begin.
- Ask yourself what is the main idea that you want people to remember. It is often helpful to state this at the beginning, in the middle and again at the end.

Remember your listeners mostly have a very short attention span so keep it short.

5. At the end of the week - review what you have written.

- Is there anything that has happened this week that you want to include?
- Ask yourself, will people get the point I am making? Will what I say help others on their Christian journey? Will what they hear challenge them? Comfort them? Encourage them? Will they learn more about God?
- Does your reflection end strongly?

Then...

Print your final copy. Some people use the format of a list of dot points. For Sundays I like to write out in full what I plan to say, but mostly have that as a back up and feel free to add things along the way.

Generally I begin with a short prayer eg "In the name of the father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen." and conclude with "The Lord be with you."

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