

## The Creativity of the Humbled Soul: preaching as an invitation to asceticism

This paper examines the intersection between creativity and spiritual experience/growth via preaching as a spiritual discipline. The twentieth-century liturgical movement led to a number of changes in liturgical practice among Orthodox churches in North America. One of the most substantial—yet least discussed—changes was the rubrical codification of the sermon as a normative component of the Divine Liturgy, which created new possibilities for the sermon to be a locus for creativity in a liturgical tradition which for centuries has been largely static. This paper argues for a spiritual and creative approach to preaching based in the virtue of humility within the Orthodox ascetical tradition, emphasizing a self-critical frame of reference and vulnerability. I will attempt to demonstrate that this approach is: a) appropriate to the liturgical context; b) supports the spiritual life of the preacher; and c) is engaging to the hearers. The discussion will also explore the parallels between Orthodox liturgical texts, such as the Canon of St. Andrew and contemporary homiletical texts, such as *With Ears to Hear* by Robin Meyers.