1. The Preacher

1.1 the preacher's authority

One becomes a preacher by preaching. ... a preacher's knowledge is always sufficient when he has no desire to appear to know more than he actually does.

1.2 the preacher's personal life

How can we reprimand the extravagant ways of the world if we make a show of our own?
2. Light and Warmth

2.1 the preacher's aim

... the preacher's end is that sinners dead in iniquity may live to justice, and that just men, who possess spiritual life, "may have it more abundantly" and become more and more perfect...

2.2 the preacher's method

To achieve this purpose and plan, the preacher must do two things, namely, instruct and move. He must teach about virtues and vices: about virtues, so as to make men love, desire, and practice them; about vices so as to make them detest, struggle against, and fly from them. To sum it all up, the preacher must bring light to the intellect and warmth to the will.

3. The Word of God

3.1 the sources

- Sacred Scripture -- We must preach the word of God. ... There is sufficient matter in Sacred Scripture for all of that; nothing further is needed.

- the Fathers of the Church -- ... they have been instruments by which God has communicated to us the true meaning of his word.

- the lives of the Saints -- ... what else is the life of a saint except the gospel put into practice?

- events in profane history -- They are good but we must use them ... in very small amounts and only to sharpen the appetite ...

- fables -- From them, choose nothing whatsoever, unless it is very brief and very relevant.

- natural history -- This is excellent, for the world, made by God's word, manifests every part of that word.

3.2 the literal or historical sense

As to the literal sense, preaching must be based on the commentaries of the doctors .... However, it is up to the preacher to evaluate it, weight the words, their propriety, and their emphasis.

3.3 the allegorical sense

With regard to the allegorical sense, the preacher must observe these points:
The first is to take an allegorical sense that is not too far-fetched, as do those who make allegories of everything.

Secondly, where it is not really apparent that one thing is the figure of the other, we must not treat such things as if one were a figure of the other, but simply by way of comparison.

Thirdly, it is necessary that the allegory be becoming.

Fourthly, we must not make over-elaborate allegories, as they lose their persuasive power by their length and seem affected.

Fifthly, the application must be made clearly and with good judgment so as to relate skillfully the various parts to one another.

3.4 anagogy and tropology

... the anagogical sense relates scriptural stories to what will take place in the next life, while the tropological sense relates them to what obtains in the soul and conscience.

These four sense provide great, good, and elevated material for our preaching, and marvelously add to understanding the doctrine taught. For this reason it is necessary to make use of them, but under the same conditions that I have said are requisite for using the allegorical sense.

3.5 the appeal to reason

With regard to such arguments (those that a noble nature and good mind can effectively employ), they are more easily found among the doctors, and especially St. Thomas, than anywhere else. ... one must not employ such material unless it can be very clearly understood, at least by ordinary hearers.

3.6 the use of illustration

Illustrations have wonderful power and add great savor to a sermon. It is only necessary that they be proper, well expressed, and better applied. ... One must be neither so brief that the example makes no impression nor so long that it grows tiresome.

3.7 comparisons

They have an inestimable efficacy to enlighten the understanding and move the will. ... There is a secret in doing this that is extremely helpful to the preacher. This is to take our scriptural comparisons from certain places where few people know how to recognize them. This is done by meditation on the words.
3.8 the homiletic method

We must adhere to method in all things; there is nothing that is more helpful to a preacher, makes his preaching more profitable, and is so pleasing to his hearers.

- **preaching on an historical event**
  - reflect on the persons involved
  - consider who? why? and how? in a mystery
  - consider faith, hope, charity, practice in a story

- **preaching on a text**
  - what virtue it refers to (marks, effects, means of acquiring)
  - how the virtue is honorable, useful and delightful
  - goods that virtue gives and evils that the contrary vice brings on

When we discuss a gospel containing many statements, it is necessary to consider those on which we wish to dwell, see that virtues they treat, speak briefly about them ..., and run through and paraphrase the others.

- **preaching on the life of a saint**
  - reporting the parts of the saint's life
  - consider the saint's virtues, sufferings, miracles
  - consider how the saint fought against vice
  - consider how we honor, serve and pray to God through the saint

With regard to method ... I readily place scriptural passages in the first place, proofs in the second, similitudes in the third, and in the fourth examples, provided they are sacred.

... method means that from its beginning to the middle a sermon teaches the hearer, and from the middle to the end it moves him.

3.9 content preparation (fill in the points)

4. How We Must Preach

Say marvelous things, but do not say them well, and they are nothing. Say only a little but say it well, and it is very much.

Preaching must be spontaneous, dignified, courageous, natural, sturdy, devout, serious, and a little slow. ... In a word it means to speak with affection and devotion, with simplicity and candor, and with confidence, and to be convinced of the doctrine we teach and of what we persuade.

The supreme art is to have no art.
Our words must be set aflame, not by shouts and unrestrained gestures, but by inward affection. They must issue from our heart rather than from our mouth. We must speak well, but heart speaks to heart, and the tongue speaks only to men's ears.