

Relit the Heart of Evangelization  
Suggested Further Reading References

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‘**relit**’, **the Heart of Evangelization**, is a dynamic training program to further the Church’s mission by spreading the Christ-centered message of the New Evangelization. RELIT has one purpose: to help you deepen your friendship with Christ by living out more fully your baptismal vocation to evangelize. The information in the following materials is drawn from Scriptures, Catholic History and Church Teaching.

The following Contents are sourced from various definitions, Liturgy of Hours Readings, Vatican II documents, and Papal Encyclicals and Apostolic Exhortations. This document contains suggested readings from Sessions 1 through 6 as follows:

1. Decree Ad gentes – on the missionary activity of the Church and Paragraphs 10-18 titled Chap II – Mission Work Itself
2. Decree Ad gentes – Paragraphs 23-27 titled Chap IV Missionaries
3. Evangelii Nuntiandi – Proclaim the Gospel – Para 9-20
4. Evangelii Nuntiandi – Proclaim the Gospel – Para 21-27
5. Evangelii Nuntiandi – Proclaim the Gospel – Para 40-47
6. Evangelii Nuntiandi – Proclaim the Gospel – Para 51-57

Supplemental Materials include:

- a. Definition of Evangelization from the Spiritual Gifts Inventory Assessment
- b. As a preface: Liturgy of the Hours - Week 7 Thursday in Ordinary Time “From the Instructions of St Columbanus, abbot” titled: **The immeasurable depths of God**
- c. In Session 2 – additional content related to quotes embedded in the videos – time line included: content related to the Popes’ understanding of Evangelization
- d. In Session 3 – Quotes from JP II in Redemptoris Missio and G. K Chesterton
- e. In Session 6 – specific Quotes from ST Catherine of Siena as referenced by Michael Dopp and additional references from her writings.

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## Introduction

### Definition of Evangelization from the Spiritual Gifts Inventory

**Evangelization** - The Holy Spirit enables individuals to share the Gospel with others in such a way that they come to know God. To exercise the gift of evangelism is to share one's faith within and beyond the parish. This gift involves an unabashed willingness to share the Good News and one's personal faith journey. **Acts 8:26-40, II Timothy 4:5**

### DECREE AD GENTES ON THE MISSION ACTIVITY OF THE CHURCH

Vatican II decree on December 7, 1965

2. The pilgrim Church is **missionary** by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father.(1)[**Dogmatic Constitution "Lumen Gentium," 48. Defines the Church as founded in Christ Jesus and in which we acquire sanctity through the grace of God...**]

*This decree, however, flows from the "fount - like love" or **charity** of God the Father who, being the "**principle without principle**" from whom the Son is begotten and Holy Spirit proceeds through the Son, freely creating us on account of His surpassing and merciful kindness and graciously calling us moreover to share with Him His life and His cry, has generously poured out, and does not cease to pour out still, His divine goodness. Thus He who created all things may at last be "**all in all**" (1 Cor. 15:28), bringing about at one and the same time His own glory and our happiness. But it pleased God to call men to share His life, not just singly, apart from any mutual bond, but rather to mold them into a people in which His sons, **once scattered abroad** might be **gathered together** (cf. John 11:52).*

### From The Baptism of the Lord Reflection 01-13-19

All baptized Christians must have intellectual curiosity to grasp the mystery of Trinity through speculative knowledge. At the same time, all Christians can start with their concrete, personal, affective relationship to God whom we encounter and know in the faith as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. However, there is no finality in both speculative and affective knowledge, because those modes of knowing take a life-time to acquire.

The following reference is from the writings of St. Columban, whose feast day is on November 26. Columban lived in the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 7<sup>th</sup> century. An Irish missionary, he traveled throughout the continent of Europe preaching and teaching. His treatise on the depths of God is part of the Liturgy of the Hours Daily readings for Thursday of the 7<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time. His perceptive grasp of God in Trinity is a great help in understanding the nature of God.

## Week 7 Thursday in Ordinary Time

### From the Instructions of St Columbanus, abbot

#### The immeasurable depths of God

God is everywhere. He is immeasurably vast and yet everywhere he is close at hand, as he himself bears witness: *I am a God close at hand, and not a God who is distant*. It is not a God who is far away that we are seeking, since (if we deserve it) he is within us. For he lives in us as the soul lives in the body – if only we are healthy limbs of his, if we are dead to sin. Then indeed he lives within us, he who has said: *And I will live in them and walk among them*. If we are worthy for him to be in us then in truth he gives us life, makes us his living limbs. As St Paul says, *In him we live and move and have our being*.

Given his indescribable and incomprehensible essence, who will explore the Most High? Who can examine the depths of God? Who will take pride in knowing the infinite God who fills all things and surrounds all things, who pervades all things and transcends all things, who takes possession of all things but is not himself possessed by anything? The infinite God *whom no-one has seen as he is*? Therefore let no-one try to penetrate the secrets of God, what he was, how he was, who he was. These things cannot be described, examined, explored. Simply – simply but strongly – believe that God is as God was, that God will be as God has always been, for God cannot be changed.

So **who is God? God is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God**. Do not demand to know more of God. Those who want to see into the depths must first consider the natural world, for knowledge of the Trinity is rightly compared to knowledge of the depths of the sea: as Ecclesiastes says, *And the great depths, who shall fathom them?* Just as the depths of the sea are invisible to human sight, so the godhead of the Trinity is beyond human sense and understanding. Thus, I say, if anyone wants to know what he should believe, let him not think that he will understand better through speech than through belief: if he does that, the wisdom of God will be further from him than before.

Therefore, seek the highest knowledge not by words and arguments but by perfect and right action. Not with the tongue, gathering arguments from God-free theories, but by faith, which proceeds from purity and simplicity of heart. If you seek the ineffable by means of argument, it will be further from you than it was before; if you seek it by faith, wisdom will be in her proper place at the gateway to knowledge, and you will see her there, at least in part. Wisdom is in a certain sense attained when you believe in the invisible without first demanding to understand it. God must be believed in as he is, that is, as being invisible; even though he can be partly seen by a pure heart.

## Session 1 – Page 10 “Decree *Ad gentes* [on the mission activity of the Church]

### CHAPTER II - MISSION WORK ITSELF Para 10 to 18

10. The **Church**, sent by Christ to reveal and to communicate the love of God to all men and nations, is aware that there still remains a gigantic missionary task for her to accomplish. For the Gospel message has not yet, or hardly yet, been heard by two million human beings (and their number is increasing daily), who are formed into large and distinct groups by permanent cultural ties, by ancient religious traditions, and by firm bonds of social necessity. Some of these men are followers of one of the great religions, but others remain strangers to the very knowledge of God, while still others expressly deny His existence, and sometimes even attack it. The Church, in order to be able to offer all of them the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, must implant herself into these groups for the same motive which led Christ to bind Himself, in virtue of His Incarnation, to certain social and cultural conditions of those human beings among whom He dwelt.

#### ARTICLE 1: Christian Witness

11. The Church must be present in these groups through her children, who dwell among them or who are sent to them. For all Christians, wherever they live, are bound to show forth, by the example of their lives and by the witness of the word, that new man put on at baptism and that power of the Holy Spirit by which they have been strengthened at Confirmation. Thus other men, observing their good works, can glorify the Father (cf. Matt. 23:16) and can **perceive more fully the real meaning of human life** and the universal bond of the community of mankind.

In order that they may be able to bear more fruitful witness to Christ, let them be joined to those men by esteem and love; let them acknowledge themselves to be members of the group of men among whom they live; let them share in cultural and social life by the various undertakings and enterprises of human living; let them be familiar with their national and religious traditions; let them gladly and reverently lay bare the seeds of the Word which lie hidden among their fellows. At the same time, however, let them look to the: profound changes which are taking place among nations, and let them exert themselves to keep modern man, intent as he is on the science and technology of today's world from becoming a stranger to things divine; rather, let them **awaken in him a yearning for that truth and charity which God has revealed.**

Even as Christ Himself searched the hearts of men, and led them to divine light, so also His disciples, profoundly penetrated by the Spirit of Christ, should show the people among whom they live, and should converse with them, that they themselves may learn by sincere and patient dialogue what treasures a generous God has distributed among the nations of the earth. But at the same time, let them try to furbish these treasures, set them free, and bring them under the dominion of God their Savior.

12. The **presence of the Christian faithful** in these human groups should be inspired by that charity with which God has loved us, and with which He wills that we should love one another (cf. 1 John 4:11). Christian charity truly extends to all, without distinction of race, creed, or social condition: it looks for neither gain nor gratitude. For as God loved us with an unselfish love, so also the faithful should in their charity care for the human person himself, loving him with the same affection with which God sought out man. Just as Christ, then, went about all the towns and villages, curing every kind of disease and infirmity as a sign that the **kingdom of God** had come (cf. Matt. 9:35ff; Acts 10:38), so also the Church, through her children, is one with men of every condition, but especially with the poor and the afflicted. For them, she gladly spends and is spent (cf. 2 Cor. 12:15), sharing in their joys and sorrows, knowing of their longings and problems, suffering with them in death's anxieties. To those in quest of peace, she wishes to answer in fraternal dialogue, bearing them the **peace and the light of the Gospel**.

Let Christians labor and collaborate with others in rightly regulating the affairs of social and economic life. With special care, let them devote themselves to the education of children and young people by means of different kinds of schools, which should be considered not only as the most excellent means of forming and developing Christian youth, but also as a valuable public service, especially in the developing nations, working toward the uplifting of human dignity, and toward better living conditions. Furthermore, let them take part in the strivings of those peoples who, waging war on famine, ignorance, and disease, are struggling to better their way of life and to secure peace in the world. In this activity, the faithful should be eager to offer prudent aid to projects sponsored by public and private organizations, by governments, by various Christian communities, and even by non - Christian religions.

However, the Church has no desire at all to intrude itself into the government of the earthly city. It claims no other authority than that of **ministering to men with the help of God**, in a spirit of **charity and faithful service** (cf. Matt. 20:26; 23:11).(1)

Closely united with men in their life and work, **Christ's disciples** hope to render to others **true witness of Christ**, and **to work for their salvation**, even where they are not able to announce Christ fully. For they are not seeking a mere material progress and prosperity for men, but are promoting their dignity and brotherly union, teaching those religious and moral truths which Christ illumined with His light; and in this way, they are gradually opening up a fuller approach to God.

Thus they **help men to attain to salvation by love for God and neighbor**, and the mystery of Christ begins to shine forth, in which there appears the new man, created according to God (cf. Eph. 4:24), and in which the charity of God is revealed.

## ARTICLE 2: Preaching the Gospel and Gathering together the People of God

13. **Wherever God opens a door** of speech for **proclaiming the mystery of Christ** (cf. Col. 4:3), there is announced to all men (cf. Mark 16:15; 1 Cor. 9:15; Rom. 10:14) with confidence and constancy (cf. Acts 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31; 1 Thess. 2:2; 2 Cor. 3:12; 7:4; Phil. 1:20; Eph. 3:12; 6:19, 20) the living God, and **He Whom He has sent for the salvation of all, Jesus Christ** (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 1 Cor. 1:18-21; Gal. 1:31; Acts 14:15-17, 17:22-31), **in order that non - Christians, when the Holy Spirit opens their heart** (cf. Acts 16:14), may believe and be freely converted to the Lord, that they may cleave sincerely to Him Who, being the "way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), fulfills all their spiritual expectations, and even infinitely surpasses them.

This conversion must be taken as an initial one, yet sufficient to make a man realize that he has been **snatched away from sin** and **led into the mystery of God's love, who called him to enter into a personal relationship with Him in Christ**. For, by the workings of divine grace, the **new convert** sets out on a spiritual journey, by means of which, already sharing through faith in the mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection, he passes from the old man to the new one, perfected in Christ (cf. Col. 3:5-10; Eph. 4:20-24). This bringing with it a progressive change of outlook and morals, must become evident with its social consequences, and must be gradually developed during the time of the catechumenate. Since the Lord he believes in is a sign of contradiction (cf. Luke 2:34; Matt. 10:34-39), the convert often experiences an abrupt breaking off of human ties, but he also tastes the joy which God gives without measure (cf. 1 Thess. 1:6).

The **Church strictly forbids forcing anyone to embrace the Faith**, or alluring or enticing people by worrisome wiles. By the same token, she also strongly insists on this right, that no one be frightened away from the Faith by unjust vexations on the part of others.(2) In accord with the Church's ancient custom, the convert's motives should be looked into, and if necessary, purified.

14. Those who, through the Church, have accepted from God a belief in Christ (3) are admitted to the catechumenate by liturgical rites. The catechumenate is not a mere expounding of doctrines and precepts, but a training period in the whole Christian life, and an apprenticeship duty drawn out, during which disciples are joined to Christ their Teacher. Therefore, **catechumens should be properly instructed in the mystery of salvation** and in the **practice of Gospel morality**, and by **sacred rites** which are to be held at successive intervals, (4) they should be introduced into the life of faith, of liturgy, and of love, which is led by the People of God.

Then, when the **sacraments of Christian initiation** have freed them from the power of darkness (cf. Col. 1:13),(5) having died with Christ been buried with Him and risen together with Him (cf. Rom. 6:4-11; Col. 2:12-13; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Mark 16:16), they receive the **Spirit** (cf. 1 Thess. 3:5-7; Acts 8:14-17) **of adoption** of sons and celebrate the remembrance of the Lord's death and resurrection together with the whole People of God.

It is to be desired that the liturgy of the Lenten and Paschal seasons should be restored in such a way as to dispose the hearts of the catechumens to celebrate the Easter mystery at whose solemn ceremonies they are **reborn to Christ** through baptism.

But this Christian initiation in the catechumenate should be taken care of not only by catechists or priests, but by the entire community of the faithful, so that right from the outset the catechumens may feel that they belong to the people of God. And since the life of the Church is an apostolic one, the catechumens also should learn to cooperate wholeheartedly, by the **witness of their lives** and by the **profession of their faith**, in the **spread of the Gospel** and in the **building up of the Church**.

Finally, the juridic [*of or relating to the administration of justice, law, or jurisprudence; legal*] status of catechumens should be clearly defined in the new code of Canon law. For since they are joined to the Church, they are already of the household of Christ, (7) and not seldom they are already leading a life of faith, hope, and charity.

### ARTICLE 3: Forming a Christian Community

15. The **Holy Spirit**, who **calls all men to Christ** by the seeds of the Lord and by the preaching of the Gospel, stirs up in their hearts a submission to the faith Who in the womb of the baptismal font, He be-gets to a new life those who believe in Christ, He gathers them into the one People of God which is "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people" (1 Peter 2:9). (8)

Therefore, let the missionaries, God's coworkers, (cf. 1 Cor. 3:9), raise up congregations of the faithful such that, walking worthy of the vocation to which they have been called (cf. Eph. 4:1), they may **exercise the priestly, prophetic, and royal office which God has entrusted to them**. [*Alludes to the baptism prayer of anointing with Sacred Chrism: Priest, Prophet, King*] In this way, the **Christian community will be a sign of God's presence in the world**: for by reason of the eucharistic sacrifice, this community is ceaselessly on the way with Christ to the Father;(9) carefully nourished on the word of God (10) it bears witness to Christ;(11) and finally, it walks in charity and is fervent with the apostolic spirit.(12)

The Christian community should, from the very start, be so formed that it call [*can?*] provide nor [*now?*] its necessities insofar as this is possible. [*lacking clarity – not corrected on the Vatican website or available documents*]

*[The Christian community should from the very start be so formed that it can provide for its own necessities insofar as this is possible. – translation from EWTN website]*

This congregation of the faithful, endowed with the riches of its own nation's culture, should be deeply rooted in the people. Let families flourish which are imbued with the **spirit of the Gospel**(13) and let them be assisted by good schools; let associations and groups be organized by means of which the lay apostolate will be able to permeate the whole of society with the spirit of the Gospel.

Lastly, **let charity shine out between Catholics of different rites.** (14 – *decree "On Oriental Churches" 30.*)

The **ecumenical spirit should be nurtured in the neophytes**, who should take into account that the brethren who believe in Christ are Christ's disciples, reborn in baptism, sharers with the People of God in very many good things. Insofar as religious conditions allow, ecumenical activity - should be furthered in such a way that, excluding any appearance of indifference or confusion on the one hand, or of unhealthy rivalry on the other, Catholics should cooperate in a brotherly spirit with their separated brethren, among to the norms of the **Decree on Ecumenism**, making before the nations a common profession of faith, insofar as their beliefs are common, in God and in Jesus Christ, and cooperating in social and in technical projects as well as in cultural and religious ones. Let them cooperate especially for the sake of Christ, their common Lord: let His Name be the bond that unites them! This cooperation should be undertaken not only among private persons, but also, subject to approval by the local Ordinary, among churches or ecclesial communities and their works.

The Christian faithful gathered together out of all nations into the Church "are not marked off from the rest of men by their government, nor by their language, nor by their political institutions," (15) and so they should live for God and Christ in a respectable way of their own national life. As good citizens, they should be true and effective patriots, all together avoiding racial prejudice and hyper nationalism, and should foster a universal love for man.

To obtain all these things, the most important and therefore worthy of special attention are the Christian laity: namely, those who have been incorporated into Christ and live in the world. For it is up to them, imbued with the spirit of Christ, to be a leaven working on the temporal order from within, to dispose it always in accordance with Christ. (16)

But it is not enough that the Christian people be present and be organized in a given nation, nor is it enough to **carry out an apostolate** by way of example. They are organized for this purpose, they are present for this, to announce Christ to their non - Christian fellow - citizens by word and example, and to aid them toward the full reception of Christ.

Now, in order to plant the Church and to make the Christian community grow, various ministries are needed, which are raised up by divine calling from the midst of the faithful congregation, and are to be carefully fostered and tended to by all. **Among these are the offices of priests, of deacons<sup>1</sup>, and of catechists, and Catholic action.** Religious men and women likewise, by their prayers and by their active work, play an indispensable role in rooting and strengthening the Kingdom of Christ in souls, and in causing it to be spread.

16. Joyfully, the Church gives thanks for the priceless gift of the priestly calling which God has granted to so many youths among those nations but recently converted to Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> Is this a prophetic statement, considering that the Order of Deacons becoming more active in the Hierarchy of the Church after a long period of hibernation with activity only in transitional rites. The formal institution of the Permanent Diaconate has raised up men dedicated to broaden the reach of Evangelization and Catechesis. See also the last two paragraphs of this section.

For the Church drives deeper roots in any given sector of the human family when the **various faithful communities** all have, from among their members, **their own ministers of salvation** in the order of bishops, priests, and deacons, serving their own brethren, so that the young churches gradually acquire a diocesan structure with their own clergy.

What this council has decreed concerning priestly vocations and formation, should be religiously observed where the Church is first planted, and among the young churches. Of great importance are the things which are said about closely joining spiritual formation with the doctrinal and pastoral; about living a life patterned after the Gospel without looking out for one's own comfort or that of one's family; about cultivating a deep appreciation of the mystery of the Church. From all this, they will be well taught to dedicate themselves wholly to the service of the Body of Christ and to the work of the Gospel, to cleave to their own bishop as his faithful co-workers, and to cooperate with their colleagues. (17)

To attain this general end, the whole training of the students should be planned in the light of the **mystery of salvation** as it is revealed in the Scriptures. This mystery of Christ and of man's salvation they can discover and live in the liturgy. (18)

These common requirements of priestly training, including the pastoral and practical ones prescribed by the council (19) should be combined with an attempt to make contact with their own particular national way of thinking and acting. Therefore, let the minds of the students be kept open and attuned to an acquaintance and an appreciation of their own nation's culture. In their philosophical and theological studies, let them consider the points of contact which mediate between the traditions and religion of their homeland on the one hand and the Christian religion on the other. (20) Likewise, priestly training should have an eye to the pastoral needs of that region; and the students should learn the history, aim, and method of the Church's missionary activity, and the special social, economic, and cultural conditions of their own people. **Let them be educated in the ecumenical spirit**, and duly prepared for fraternal dialogue with non - Christians.(21) All this demands that studies for the priesthood be undertaken, so far as possible, in association and living together with their own people.(22) Finally, let care be taken that students are trained in ordinary ecclesiastical and financial administration.

Moreover, suitable priests should be chosen, after a little pastoral practice, to pursue higher studies in universities, even abroad and especially in Rome as well as in other institutes of learning. In this way the young churches will have at hand men from among the local clergy equipped with the learning and skill needed for discharging more difficult ecclesiastical duties.

Where episcopal conferences deem it opportune, the order of the **diaconate** should be restored as a **permanent** state of life according to the norms of the Constitution "**De Ecclesia.**"(23 – *Dogmatic Constitution: Lumen Gentium*) For there are men who actually carry out the functions of the deacon's office, either preaching the word of God as catechists, or presiding over scattered Christian communities in the name of the pastor and the bishop, or practicing charity in social or relief work. [*a recognition of the types of services already being carried out in the various Catholic communities and an awareness of the potential of the Sacrament of Holy Orders – at an opportune time, it would be insightful to discover the details of History that shaped this thinking*]

It is only right to **strengthen them by the imposition of hands** which has come down from the Apostles, and to bind them more closely to the altar, that they may carry out their ministry more effectively because of the **sacramental grace** of the **diaconate**.

17. Likewise worthy of praise are the **ranks of men and women catechists**, well deserving of missionary work to the nations. Imbued with the apostolic spirit, they labor much to make an outstanding and altogether necessary **contribution to the spread of the Faith** and of the Church.

In our time, when there are so few clerics to preach the Gospel to such great numbers and to exercise the pastoral ministry, the **position of catechists is of great importance**. Therefore their training must be so accomplished and so adapted to advances on the cultural level that as reliable coworkers of the priestly order, they may perform their task well, though it be weighed down with new and greater burdens.

There should therefore be an increase in the number of schools, both on the diocesan and on the regional levels, wherein future catechists may study Catholic doctrine, especially in the fields of Scripture and the liturgy, as well as catechetical method and pastoral practice; schools wherein they can develop in themselves a Christian character, and wherein they can devote themselves tirelessly to cultivating piety and sanctity of life. Moreover, conventions or courses should be held in which at certain times catechists could be refreshed in the disciplines and skills useful for their ministry and in which their spiritual life could be nourished and strengthened. In addition, for those who devote themselves entirely to this work, a decent standard of living should be provided, and social security, by **paying them a just wage**. (24)

It would be desirable for the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to provide special funds for the due training and support of catechists. If it seems necessary and fitting, let a special "**Opus pro Catechists**" be founded.

Moreover, the churches should gratefully acknowledge the noble work being done by auxiliary catechists, whose help they will need. These preside over the prayers in their communities and teach sacred doctrine. Something suitable should be done for their doctrinal and spiritual training. Besides, it is to be hoped that, where it seems opportune, catechists who are duly trained should receive a "**missio canonica**" in a publicly celebrated liturgical ceremony, so that in the eyes of the people they may serve the Faith with greater authority.

18. Right from the planting stage of the Church, the religious life should be carefully fostered. This not only offers precious and absolutely necessary assistance to missionary activity, but by a more inward consecration made to God in the Church, it also clearly manifests and signifies the inner nature of the Christian calling.(25)

**Religious institutes**, working to plant the Church, and thoroughly Imbued with mystic treasures with which the Church's religious tradition is adorned, should strive to give expression to them and to hand them on, according to the nature and the genius of each nation. Let them reflect attentively on how Christian religious life might be able to **assimilate** the

**ascetic and contemplative traditions**, whose seeds were sometimes planted by God in ancient cultures already prior to the preaching of the Gospel.

Various forms of religious life are to be cultivated in the young churches, in order that they may display various aspects of the mission of Christ and of the life of the Church, and may devote themselves to various pastoral works, and prepare their members to exercise them rightly. On the other hand, the bishops in their conference should see to it that congregations pursuing the same apostolic aims are not multiplied to the detriment of the religious life and of the apostolate.

Worthy of special mention are the various projects for causing the **contemplative life** to take root. There are those who in such an attempt have kept the essential element of a monastic institution, and are bent on implanting the rich tradition of their order; there are others again who are returning to the simpler forms of ancient monasticism. But all are studiously looking for a genuine adaptation to local conditions. Since the **contemplative life** belongs to the fullness of the Church's presence, let it be put into effect everywhere.

## Session 2 – Page 14 Ad Gentes cont'd

**Evangelization = Bringing the Good News we've received to another person.**

**JPII: Evangelization is not an imposition, but a proposition.**

**[15:23] 1. Evangelization is the universal vocation of the Church and its members.**

**]15:43] Francis – Evangelization is the task of the Church. EG 111**

**[15:53] Paul VI – The Church exists in order to evangelize. EN 14**

**2. Evangelization is Christocentric**

**3. Evangelization is directed toward Conversion**

**4. Evangelization seeks to transform individual lives and cultures**

**5. Evangelization is only possible through the grace and the work of the Holy Spirit**

## CHAPTER IV – MISSIONARIES Para 23-27

23. Although every disciple of Christ, as far in him lies, has the **duty of spreading the Faith**,<sup>(1)</sup> Christ the Lord always calls whomever He will from among the number of His disciples, to be with Him and to be sent by Him to **preach to the nations** (cf. Mark 3:13). Therefore, by the Holy Spirit, who distributes the charismata as He wills for the common good (1 Cor. 12:11), He inspires the missionary vocation in the hearts of individuals, and at the same time He raises up in the Church certain **institutes** (*2 – orders, congregations, institutions and associations which work in missions*) which take as their own special task the duty of preaching the Gospel, **a duty belonging to the whole Church**.

They are assigned with a special vocation who, being endowed with a suitable natural temperament, and being fit as regards talent and other qualities, have been trained to undertake mission work; (3) or be they **autochthonous** [*of and inhabitant of a place; indigenous rather than descended from migrants or colonists*] or be they foreigners: priests, Religious, or laymen. Sent by legitimate authority, they go out in faith and obedience to those who are far from Christ. They are set apart for the work for which they have been taken up (cf. Acts 13:2), as ministers of the Gospel, "that the offering up of the Gentiles may become acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:16).

24. Yet **man must respond to God Who calls**, and that in such a way, that without taking counsel with flesh and blood (Gal. 1:16), he **devotes himself wholly to the work of the Gospel**. This response, how-ever can only be given when the **Holy Spirit gives** His inspiration and His power. For he who is sent enters upon the life and mission of Him Who "emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave" (Phil. 2:7). Therefore, he **must be ready to stay at his vocation for an entire lifetime**, and to renounce himself and all those whom he thus far considered as his own, and instead to "make himself all things to all men" (1 Cor. 9:22).

Announcing the Gospel to all nations, he confidently makes known the mystery of Christ, whose ambassador he is, so that in him he dares to speak as he ought (cf. Eph. 6:19; Acts 4:31), not being ashamed of the scandal of the Cross. Following in his Master's footsteps, meek and humble of heart, he proves that His yoke is easy and His burden light (Matt. 11:29ff.).

By a **truly evangelical life**, (4) in much patience, in long - suffering, in kindness, in unaffected love (cf. 2 Cor. 6:4ff.), he bears witness to his Lord, if need be to the shedding of his blood. He will ask of God the power and strength, that he may know that there is an overflowing of joy amid much testing of tribulation and deep poverty (2 Cor. 8:2). Let him be convinced that obedience is the hallmark of the servant of Christ, who redeemed the human race by His obedience.

The heralds of the Gospel lest they neglect the grace which is in them, should be renewed day by day in the spirit of their mind (cf. 1 Tim. 4:14; Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 4:16). Their Ordinaries and superiors should gather the missionaries together from time to time, that they be strengthened in the hope of their calling and may be renewed in the apostolic ministry, even in houses expressly set up for this purpose.

25. For such an exalted task, the future missionary is to be prepared by a special spiritual and moral training. (5) For he must have the spirit of initiative in beginning, as well as that of constancy in carrying through what he has begun; he must be persevering in difficulties, patient and strong of heart in bearing with solitude, fatigue, and fruitless labor. He will

encounter men with an open mind and a wide heart; he will gladly take up the duties which are entrusted to him; he will with a noble spirit adapt himself to the people's foreign way of doing things and to changing circumstances; while in the spirit of harmony and mutual charity, he will cooperate with his brethren and all who dedicate themselves to the same task, so that together with the faithful, they will be one heart and one soul (cf. Acts 2:42; 4:32)(7) in imitation of the apostolic community.

These **habits of mind** should be **earnestly exercised** already in his time of training; they should be cultivated, and should be uplifted and nourished by the spiritual life. Imbued with a living faith and a hope that never fails, the missionary **should be a man [or woman] of prayer**. Let him have an ardent spirit of power and of love and of prudence (cf. 2 Tim. 1:7). Let him learn to be self-sufficing in whatever circumstances (Phil. 4:11); always bearing about in himself the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may work in those to whom he is sent (2 Cor. 4:10ff.), out of zeal of souls, let him gladly spend all and be spent himself for souls (cf. 2 Cor. 12:15ff.), so that "**by the daily practice of his duty he may grow in the love of God and neighbor**."(8) Thus obedient to the will of the Father together with Christ, he will continue His mission under the hierarchical authority of the Church.

26. Those who are sent to different nations in order to be good ministers of Christ, should be **nourished with the "words of faith and with good doctrine"** (1 Tim. 4:6), which they should draw principally from the Sacred Scriptures, studying the mystery of Christ, whose heralds and witnesses they will be.

Therefore, all missionaries - priests, Brothers, Sisters, and lay folk - each according to their own state, should be prepared and trained, lest they be found unequal to the demands of their future work. (9) From the very beginning, their **doctrinal training** should be so planned that it takes in both the **universality of the Church** and the **diversity of the world's nations**.

This holds for all of their studies by which they are prepared for the exercise of the ministry, as also for the other studies which it would be useful for them to learn, that they may have a **general knowledge of the peoples, cultures, and religions; not only a knowledge that looks to the past, but one that considers the present time**. For anyone who is going to encounter another people should have a great esteem for their patrimony and their language and their customs. It is very necessary for the future missionary to devote himself to **missiological studies**: that is, to **know the teachings and norms of the Church** concerning missionary activity, to know along what roads the heralds of the Gospel have run in the course of the centuries, and also what is the present condition of the missions, and what methods are considered more effective at the present time. (8)

But even though this entire training program is imbued with pastoral solicitude, a special and organized apostolic training ought to be given, by means of both teaching and practical exercises.(9)

Brothers and Sisters, in great numbers, should be well instructed and prepared in the catechetical art, that they may collaborate still better in the apostolate.

Even those who take part in missionary activity only for a time have to be given a training which is suited to their condition.

All these different kinds of formation should be completed in the lands to which they are sent, so that the missionaries may have a more thorough knowledge of the history, social structures, and customs of the people; that they may have an insight into their moral order and their

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religious precepts, and into the secret notions which, according to their sacred tradition, they have formed concerning God, the world and man.(10) Let the missionaries learn the languages to such a degree that they can use them in a fluent and polished manner, and so find more easy access to the minds and the hearts of men. (11) Furthermore, they should be properly introduced into special pastoral problems.

Some should be more thoroughly prepared in missiological institutes or in other faculties or universities, so that they may be able to discharge special duties more effectively(12) and be a help, by their learning, to other missionaries in carrying on the mission work, which especially in our time presents so many difficulties and opportunities. It is moreover highly desirable that the regional episcopal conferences should have available an abundance of such experts, and that they should make fruitful use of their knowledge and experience in the necessities of their office. Nor should there be wanting some who are perfectly skilled in the use of practical instruments and the means of social communication, the importance of which should be highly appreciated by all.

27. All these things, though necessary for everyone who is sent to the nations, can scarcely be attained to in reality by individual missionaries. Since even mission work itself, as experience teaches, cannot be accomplished by lone individuals, a common calling has gathered these individuals together into institutes, in which, with united efforts, they are properly trained and might carry out this work in the name of the Church and under the direction of the hierarchy.

For many centuries, these institutes have borne the burden of the day and the heat, devoting themselves to missionary labor either entirely or in part. Often vast territories were committed to them by the Holy See for evangelization, and there they gathered together a new people for God, a local church clinging to their own shepherds. With their zeal and experience, they will serve, by fraternal cooperation either in the care of souls or in rendering special services for the common good, those churches which were founded at the cost of their sweat and even of their blood.

Sometimes, throughout the entire extent of some region, they will take certain tasks upon themselves; e.g., the **evangelization of groups of peoples** who perhaps for special reasons have not yet accepted the Gospel message, or who have thus far resisted it.(13)

If need be, let them be on hand to help and train, out of their own experience, those who will devote themselves to missionary activity for a time.

For these reasons and since there are still many nations to be led to Christ, the **institutes remain extremely necessary**.

### Session 3, page 15 “The re-evangelization of the baptized”

#### Quote from JP II – Redemptoris Missio

I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a **new evangelization** and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this **supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples**. JP II, Redemptoris Missio 3

## Session 3 - Redemptoris missio – Mission of the Redeemer

On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate

1990.12.07 **Ioannes Paulus PP. II**

*[JPII at starting about 4 min 15 sec]*

### Mission Ad Gentes Retains Its Value

33. The fact that there is a diversity of activities in the Church's one mission is not intrinsic to that mission, but arises from the variety of circumstances in which that mission is carried out.  
51 Looking at today's world from the viewpoint of evangelization, we can distinguish *three situations*.

**First**, there is the situation which the Church's missionary activity addresses: peoples, groups, and socio-cultural contexts in which Christ and his Gospel are not known, or which lack Christian communities sufficiently mature to be able to incarnate the faith in their own environment and proclaim it to other groups. This is *mission ad gentes* in the proper sense of the term.<sup>52</sup>

**Secondly**, there are Christian communities with adequate and solid ecclesial structures. They are fervent in their faith and in Christian living. They bear witness to the Gospel in their surroundings and have a sense of commitment to the universal mission. In these communities the Church carries out her activity and *pastoral care*.

**Thirdly**, there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a "*new evangelization*" or a "*re-evangelization*."

**51.** Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes*, 6.

**52.** Cf. *ibid.*

**[9 m 33 s] G. K. Chesterton**

It is an old story that, while we may need someone like Dominic to convert the heathen to Christianity, we are in even greater need of someone like Francis to convert the Christian to Christianity.

## Session 3, page 18

### EVANGELII NUNTIANDI – Proclaim the Gospel Para 9-20

TO THE EPISCOPATE, TO THE CLERGY  
AND TO ALL THE FAITHFUL  
OF THE ENTIRE WORLD

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION  
OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

9. As the kernel and center of His Good News, **Christ proclaims salvation**, this great gift of God which is liberation from everything that oppresses man but which is above all liberation from sin and the Evil One, in the joy of knowing God and being known by Him, of seeing Him, and of being given over to Him. All of this is begun during the life of Christ and definitively accomplished by His death and resurrection. But it must be patiently carried on during the course of history, in order to be realized fully on the day of the **final coming of Christ**, whose date is known to no one except the Father. [23]

10. This kingdom and this salvation, which are the key words of Jesus Christ's evangelization, are available to every human being as **grace and mercy**, and yet at the same time each individual must gain them by force - they belong to the violent, says the Lord, [24 – *MT 11:12; LK 16:16*] through toil and suffering, through a life lived according to the Gospel, through **abnegation** [*denial, renouncement, renunciation, repudiation, self-denial; giving up a right or possession*] and the cross, through the spirit of the beatitudes. But above all each individual gains them through a total interior renewal which the Gospel calls **metanoia** [*change one's mind, repent, spiritual conversion*]; it is a radical conversion, a profound change of mind and heart.[25]

11. Christ accomplished this proclamation of the kingdom of God through the untiring preaching of a word which, it will be said, has no equal elsewhere: "Here is a teaching that is new, and with authority behind it." [26] "And he won the approval of all, and they

were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips. [27] There has never been anybody who has spoken like him." [28] His words reveal the secret of God, His plan and His promise, and thereby change the heart of man and his destiny.

12. But Christ also carries out this proclamation by innumerable signs, which amaze the crowds and at the same time draw them to Him in order to see Him, listen to Him and allow themselves to be transformed by Him: the sick are cured, water is changed into wine, bread is multiplied, the dead come back to life. And **among all these signs** there is the one to which He attaches great importance: the humble and the poor are evangelized, become His disciples and gather together "in His name" in the great community of those who believe in Him. For this Jesus who declared, "**I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God**"[29 – *LK 4:43 - "To the other towns also I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this purpose I have been sent."*] is the same Jesus of whom John the Evangelist said that He had come and was to die "to gather together in unity the scattered children of God." [30] Thus He accomplishes His revelation, completing it and confirming it by the entire revelation that He makes of Himself, by words and deeds, by signs and miracles, and more especially by His death, by His resurrection and by the sending of the Spirit of Truth. [31]

13. Those who sincerely accept the Good News, through the power of this acceptance and of shared faith therefore **gather together in Jesus' name** in order to **seek together the kingdom**, build it up and live it. They make up a community which is in its turn evangelizing. The command to the Twelve to go out and proclaim the Good News is also valid for all Christians, though in a different way. It is precisely for this reason that Peter calls Christians "a people set apart to **sing the praises of God**," [32] those marvelous things that each one was able to hear in his own language. [33] Moreover, the Good News of the kingdom which is coming and which has begun is meant for all people of all times. Those who have received the Good News and who have been gathered by it into the **community of salvation can and must communicate and spread it.**

14. The Church knows this. She has a vivid awareness of the fact that the Savior's words, "I must proclaim the Good News of the kingdom of God,"[34 & 29 above] apply in all truth to herself: She willingly adds with St. Paul: "Not that I boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty that has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it"[35] It is with joy and consolation that at the end of the great Assembly of 1974 we heard these illuminating words: "**We wish to confirm once more that the task of evangelizing all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church.**"[36 - *Declaration of the Synod Fathers*", 4: *L'Osservatore Romano (27 October 1974), p. 6.*] It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent. Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. **She exists in order to evangelize**, that is to say, **in order to preach and teach**, to be the **channel of the gift of grace**, to **reconcile sinners with God**, and to **perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass**, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection.

15. Anyone who rereads in the New Testament the origins of the Church, follows her history step by step and watches her live and act, sees that she is linked to evangelization in her most intimate being:

- The Church is born of the evangelizing activity of Jesus and the Twelve. She is the normal, desired, most immediate and most visible fruit of this activity: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations." [37] Now, "they accepted what he said and were baptized. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.... Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved." [38] - Having been born consequently out of being sent, the Church in her turn is sent by Jesus. The Church remains in the world when the Lord of glory returns to the Father. She remains as a sign - simultaneously obscure and luminous - of a new presence of Jesus, of His departure and of His permanent presence. She prolongs and continues Him. And it is above all His mission and His condition of being an evangelizer that she is called upon to continue. [39] For the Christian community is never closed in upon itself. The intimate

life of this community - the life of listening to the Word and the apostles' teaching, charity lived in a fraternal way, the sharing of bread [40] this intimate life only acquires its full meaning when it becomes a witness, when it evokes admiration and conversion, and when it becomes the preaching and proclamation of the Good News. Thus **it is the whole Church that receives the mission to evangelize, and the work of each individual member is important for the whole.**

- The Church is an evangelizer, **but she begins by being evangelized herself**. She is the community of believers, the community of hope lived and communicated, the community of brotherly love, and she needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love. She is the People of God immersed in the world, and often tempted by idols, and she always needs to hear the proclamation of the "mighty works of God"[41] which converted her to the Lord; she always needs to be called together afresh by Him and reunited. In brief, this means that she has a **constant need of being evangelized**, if she wishes to retain freshness, vigor and strength in order to proclaim the Gospel. The Second Vatican Council recalled [42] and the 1974 Synod vigorously took up again this theme of the Church which is evangelized by constant conversion and renewal, in order to evangelize the world with credibility.

- The Church is the depository of the Good News to be proclaimed. The promises of the New Alliance in Jesus Christ, the teaching of the Lord and the apostles, the Word of life, the sources of grace and of God's loving kindness, the path of salvation - all these things have been entrusted to her. It is the content of the Gospel, and therefore of evangelization, that she preserves as a precious living heritage, not in order to keep it hidden but to communicate it.

- Having been sent and evangelized, the Church herself sends out evangelizers. She puts on their lips the saving Word, she explains to them the message of which she herself is the depository, she gives them the mandate which she herself has received

and she sends them out to preach. To preach not their own selves or their personal ideas,[43] but a Gospel of which neither she nor they are the absolute masters and owners, to dispose of it as they wish, but a Gospel of which they are the ministers, in order to pass it on with complete fidelity.

16. There is thus a **profound link between Christ, the Church and evangelization**. During the period of the Church that we are living in, it is she who has the task of evangelizing. This mandate is not accomplished without her, and still less against her.

It is certainly fitting to recall this fact at a moment like the present one when it happens that not without sorrow we can hear people - whom we wish to believe are well-intentioned but who are certainly misguided in their attitude - **continually claiming to love Christ but without the Church, to listen to Christ but not the Church, to belong to Christ but outside the Church**. The absurdity of this dichotomy is clearly evident in this phrase of the Gospel: "**Anyone who rejects you rejects me.**"[44] And how can one wish to love Christ without loving the Church, if the finest witness to Christ is that of St. Paul: "**Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her**"? [45 – *Eph 5:25*]

17. In the Church's evangelizing activity there are of course certain elements and aspects to be specially insisted on. Some of them are so important that there will be a tendency simply to identify them with evangelization. Thus **it has been possible to define evangelization in terms of proclaiming Christ to those who do not know Him, of preaching, of catechesis, of conferring Baptism and the other sacraments.**

Any partial and fragmentary definition which attempts to render the reality of evangelization in all its richness, complexity and dynamism does so only at the risk of impoverishing it and even of distorting it. It is impossible to grasp the concept of evangelization unless one tries to keep in view all its essential elements.

These elements were strongly emphasized at the last Synod, and are still the subject of frequent study, as a result of the Synod's work. We rejoice in the fact that these elements basically follow the lines of those transmitted to us by the **Second Vatican Council**, especially in "**Lumen Gentium**," "**Gaudium et spes**" and "**Ad gentes**."

18. For the Church, **evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity**, and through its influence **transforming humanity from within** and making it new: "Now I am making the whole of creation new." [46] But there is no new humanity if there are not first of all new persons renewed by Baptism [47] and by lives lived according to the Gospel. [48] The **purpose of evangelization** is therefore precisely this interior change, and if it had to be expressed in one sentence the best way of stating it would be to say that the **Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert**, [49] solely through the divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieu which are theirs.

19. **Strata of humanity** which are transformed: for the Church it is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas or to ever greater numbers of people, but also of affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, mankind's criteria of judgment, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation.

20. All this could be expressed in the following words: **what matters is to evangelize man's culture and cultures** (not in a purely decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots), in the wide and rich sense which these terms have in *Gaudium et spes*, [50] always taking the person as one's starting-point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God.

The Gospel, and therefore evangelization, are certainly not identical with culture, and they are independent in regard to all cultures. Nevertheless, the kingdom which the Gospel proclaims is lived by men who are profoundly linked to a culture, and the building up of the kingdom cannot avoid borrowing the elements of human culture or cultures. Though independent of cultures, the **Gospel and evangelization are not necessarily incompatible with them**; rather they are capable of permeating them all without becoming subject to any one of them.

The split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times. Therefore **every effort must be made to ensure a full evangelization of culture, or more correctly of cultures**. They have to be regenerated by an encounter with the Gospel. But this encounter will not take place if the Gospel is not proclaimed.

#### **Session 4, page 24 – Evangelii Nuntiandii – Proclaiming the Gospel para 21-27**

21. Above all the Gospel must be proclaimed by **witness**. Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who, in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the efforts of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and their hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine. **Through this wordless witness these Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our midst? Such a witness is already a silent proclamation of the Good News and a very powerful and effective one. Here we have an initial act of evangelization. The above questions will ask, whether they are people to whom Christ has never been proclaimed,**

or baptized people who do not practice, or people who live as nominal Christians but according to principles that are in no way Christian, or people who are seeking, and not without suffering, something or someone whom they sense but cannot name. Other questions will arise, deeper and more demanding ones, questions evoked by this **witness** which involves presence, sharing, solidarity, and which is an essential element, and generally the first one, in evangelization." [51]

All Christians are called to this **witness**, and in this way they can be real evangelizers. We are thinking especially of the responsibility incumbent on immigrants in the country that receives them.

22. Nevertheless this always remains insufficient, because even the finest **witness** will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not explained, justified - what Peter called always having "*your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have*" [52 - *1 PET 3:15*] - and made explicit by a clear and unequivocal **proclamation** of the Lord Jesus. The Good News proclaimed by the witness of life sooner or later has to be proclaimed by the word of life. There is no true evangelization if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed. The history of the Church, from the discourse of Peter on the morning of Pentecost onwards, has been intermingled and identified with the history of this proclamation. At every new phase of human history, the Church, constantly gripped by the desire to evangelize, has but one preoccupation: whom to send to proclaim the mystery of Jesus? In what way is this mystery to be proclaimed? How can one ensure that it will resound and reach all those who should hear it? This proclamation - **kerygma, preaching or catechesis** - occupies such an important place in evangelization that it has often become synonymous with it; and yet it is only one aspect of evangelization.

*[Above paragraph also referenced in Ses 10 as referenced on Pg 47 of guide]*

23. In fact the **proclamation** only reaches full development when it is listened to, accepted and assimilated, and when it arouses a genuine adherence in the one who has thus received it. **An adherence to the truths which the Lord in His mercy has revealed; [quoted at P 57]** still more, an adherence to a program of life - a life henceforth transformed - which He proposes. In a word, adherence to the kingdom, that is to say, to the "new world," to the new state of things, to the new manner of being, of living, of living in community, which the Gospel inaugurates. Such an adherence, which cannot remain abstract and unincarnated, reveals itself concretely by a visible entry into a community of believers. Thus those whose life has been transformed enter a community which is itself a sign of transformation, a sign of newness of life: it is the Church, the visible sacrament of salvation. [53] Our entry into the ecclesial community will in its turn be expressed through many other signs which prolong and unfold the sign of the Church. In the dynamism of evangelization, a person who accepts the Church as the Word which saves [54] normally translates it into the following sacramental acts: adherence to the Church, and acceptance of the sacraments, which manifest and support this adherence through the grace which they confer.

24. Finally, **the person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others. Here lies the test of truth, the touchstone of evangelization: it is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn. [Quoted at Session 12, pg 59] [the whole point of the relit program]**

To complete these considerations on the meaning of evangelization, a final observation must be made, one which we consider will help to clarify the reflections that follow. **Evangelization, as we have said, is a complex process made up of varied elements: the renewal of humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative.** These elements may appear to be

contradictory, indeed mutually exclusive. In fact they are **complementary** and **mutually enriching**. Each one must always be seen in relationship with the others. The value of the last Synod was to have constantly invited us to relate these elements rather than to place them in opposition one to the other, in order to reach a full understanding of the Church's evangelizing activity.

It is this global vision which we now wish to outline, by examining the content of evangelization and the methods of evangelizing and by clarifying to whom the Gospel message is addressed and who today is responsible for it.

25. In the message which the Church proclaims there are certainly many secondary elements. Their presentation depends greatly on changing circumstances. They themselves also change. But there is the essential content, the living substance, which cannot be modified or ignored without seriously diluting the nature of evangelization itself.

26. It is not superfluous to recall the following points: **to evangelize** is first of all **to bear witness**, in a simple and direct way, **to God revealed by Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to bear witness that in His Son God has loved the world - that in His Incarnate Word He has given being to all things and has called men to eternal life**. Perhaps this attestation of God will be for many people the unknown God [55] whom they adore without giving Him a name, or whom they seek by a secret call of the heart when they experience the emptiness of all idols. But it is fully evangelizing in manifesting the fact that for man the Creator is not an anonymous and remote power; He is the Father: "...that we should be called children of God; and so we are." [56] And thus we are one another's brothers and sisters in God.

27. **Evangelization** will also always contain - as the foundation, center, and at the same time, summit of its dynamism - a clear proclamation that, **in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to all men, as a**

**gift of God's grace and mercy. [57] And not an immanent salvation**, meeting material or even spiritual needs, restricted to the framework of temporal existence and completely identified with temporal desires, hopes, affairs and struggles, but **a salvation which exceeds all these limits in order to reach fulfillment in a communion with the one and only divine Absolute**: a transcendent and eschatological salvation, which **indeed has its beginning in this life but which is fulfilled in eternity.**

23. Cf. Mt. 24:36; Acts 1:7; 1 Thess 5:1-2.

24. Cf. Mt 11:12; Lk 16:16.

25. Cf. Mt 4:17.

26. Mk 1:27.

27. Lk 4:22.

28. Jn 7:46.

29. Lk 4:43.

30. Jn 11:52.

31. Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation Dei Verbum, 4: AAS 58 (1966), pp. 818-819.32. 1 Pt 2:9.

33. Cf. Acts 2:11.

34. Lk 4:43.

35. 1 Cor 9:16.

36. "Declaration of the Synod Fathers", 4: L'Osservatore Romano (27 October 1974), p. 6.

37. Mt 28:19.

38. Acts 2:41, 47.

39. Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium, 8: AAS 57 (1965), p. 11; Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity d Gentes, 5: AAS 58 (1966), pp 951-952.

40. Cf. Acts 2:42-46; 4:32-35; 5:12-16.

41. Cf. Acts 2:11; 1 Pt 2:9.

42. Cf. Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, 5, 11-12: AAS 58 (1966), pp. 951- 952, 959-961.
43. Cf. 2 Cor 4:5; Saint Augustine *Sermo XLVI, De Pastoribus*: ccl XLI, pp. 529-530.
44. Lk 10:16; cf. Saint Cyprian, *De Unitate Ecclesiae*, 14: PL 4, 527; Saint Augustine, *Enarrat.* 88, *Sermo*, 2, 14: PL 37, 1140; Saint John Chrysostom, *Hom. de capto Eutropio*, 6: PG 52, 462.
45. Eph 5:25.
46. Rev. 21:5; cf. 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15.
47. Cf. Rom 6:4.
48. Cf. Eph 4:24-25; Col 3:9-10.
49. Cf. Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18, 2:4.
50. Cf. 53: AAS 58 (1966), p. 1075.
51. Cf. Tertullian *Apologeticum*, 39: CCL, I, PP. 150-153; Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 9 and 31: CSLP, Turin 1963, pp. 11-13, 47-48.
52. 1 Pt 3:15.
53. Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium*, 1, 9, 48; AAS 57 (1965), pp. 5, 12-14, 53-54; *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et Spes*, 42, 45, AAS 58 (1966), pp. 1060-1061, 1065-1066; *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity Ad Gentes*, 1, 5: AAS 58 (1966), pp. 947, 951-952.
54. Cf. Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18.
55. Cf. Acts 17:22-23.
56. 1 Jn 3:1; cf. Rom 8:14-17.
57. Cf. Eph 2:8; Rom 1:16. Cf. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaratio ad fidem tuendam in mysteria Incarnationis et SS. Trinitatis e quibusdam recentibus erroribus* (21 February 1972): AAS 64 (1972), pp. 237-241.

## Session 5, page 28

### EVANGELII NUNTIANDI: Para 40-47

TO THE EPISCOPATE, TO THE CLERGY AND TO ALL  
THE FAITHFUL OF THE ENTIRE WORLD

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION

OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

40. The obvious importance of the content of evangelization must not overshadow the importance of the ways and means.

This question of "how to evangelize" is **permanently relevant**, because the **methods** of evangelizing **vary** according to the different circumstances of time, place and culture, and because they thereby present a certain challenge to our capacity for discovery and adaptation.

On us particularly, the pastors of the Church, rests the responsibility for reshaping with boldness and wisdom, but in complete fidelity to the content of evangelization, the means that are most suitable and effective for communicating the Gospel message to the men and women of our times.

Let it suffice, in this meditation, to **mention a number of methods** which, for one reason or another, **have a fundamental importance**.

41. Without repeating everything that we have already mentioned, it is appropriate **first** of all to emphasize the following point: for the Church, the **first means of evangelization** is the **witness of an authentically Christian life**, given over to God in a communion that nothing should destroy and at the same time given to one's neighbor with limitless zeal. As we said recently to a group of lay people, "**Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are**

witnesses." [67 - *Pope Paul VI, Address to the Members of the Consilium de Laicis (2 October 1974): AAS 66 (1974), p. 568*] St. Peter expressed this well when he held up the example of a reverent and chaste life that wins over even without a word those who refuse to obey the word. [68] It is therefore primarily by her conduct and by her life that the Church will evangelize the world, in other words, by her living witness of fidelity to the Lord Jesus- the witness of poverty and detachment, of freedom in the face of the powers of this world, in short, the witness of sanctity.

42. Secondly, it is not superfluous to emphasize the **importance and necessity of preaching**. "And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? ... So **faith comes from what is heard and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ**." [69 - *Rom 10:14, 17*] This law once laid down by the Apostle Paul maintains its full force today.

**Preaching, the verbal proclamation of a message**, is indeed always indispensable. We are well aware that modern man is sated by talk; he is obviously often tired of listening and, what is worse, impervious to words. We are also aware that many psychologists and sociologists express the view that **modern man has passed beyond the civilization of the word**, which is now ineffective and useless, and that **today he lives in the civilization of the image**. These facts should certainly impel us to employ, for the purpose of transmitting the Gospel message, the modern means which this civilization has produced. Very positive efforts have in fact already been made in this sphere. We cannot but praise them and encourage their further development. The fatigue produced these days by so much empty talk and the relevance of many other forms of communication must not however diminish the permanent power of the word, or cause a loss of confidence in it. **The word remains ever relevant**, especially when it is the **bearer of the power of God**. [70] This is why St. Paul's axiom, "**Faith comes from what is heard**," [71- *Rom 10:17*] also retains its relevance: it is the **Word that is heard which leads to belief**.

43. This evangelizing preaching takes on many forms, and zeal will inspire the reshaping of them almost indefinitely. In fact there are innumerable events in life and human situations which offer the opportunity for a discreet but incisive statement of what the Lord has to say in this or that particular circumstance. It suffices to have true spiritual sensitivity for reading God's message in events. But at a time **when the liturgy renewed by the Council has given greatly increased value to the Liturgy of the Word**, it would be a mistake not to **see in the homily an important and very adaptable instrument of evangelization**. Of course it is necessary to know and put to good use the exigencies and the possibilities of the homily, so that it can acquire all its pastoral effectiveness. But above all it is necessary to be convinced of this and to devote oneself to it with love. **This preaching, inserted in a unique way into the Eucharistic celebration, from which it receives special force and vigor, certainly has a particular role in evangelization, to the extent that it expresses the profound faith of the sacred minister and is impregnated with love.** The faithful assembled as a Paschal Church, celebrating the feast of the Lord present in their midst, expect much from this preaching, and will greatly benefit from it provided that it is **simple, clear, direct, well-adapted, profoundly dependent on Gospel teaching and faithful to the magisterium, animated by a balanced apostolic ardor coming from its own characteristic nature, full of hope, fostering belief, and productive of peace and unity**. Many parochial or other communities live and are held together thanks to the Sunday homily, when it possesses these qualities.

Let us add that, thanks to the same liturgical renewal, the **Eucharistic celebration is not the only appropriate moment for the homily**. The homily has a place and must not be neglected in the **celebration of all the sacraments**, at para-liturgies, and in assemblies of the faithful. It will **always be a privileged occasion for communicating the Word of the Lord**.

44. A means of evangelization that must not be neglected is that of **catechetical instruction**. The intelligence, especially that of children and young people, needs to **learn through systematic religious instruction the fundamental teachings, the living**

**content of the truth** which God has wished to convey to us and which the Church has sought to express in an ever richer fashion during the course of her long history. No one will deny that this instruction must be given to form patterns of Christian living and not to remain only notional. Truly the effort for evangelization will profit greatly- at the level of catechetical instruction given at church, in the schools, where this is possible, and in every case in Christian homes- if those giving catechetical instruction have suitable texts, updated with wisdom and competence, under the authority of the bishops. The methods must be adapted to the age, culture and aptitude of the persons concerned, they must seek always to fix in the memory, intelligence and heart the essential truths that must impregnate all of life. It is necessary above all to prepare good instructors- parochial catechists, teachers, **parents-** who are **desirous of perfecting themselves in this superior art**, which is **indispensable and requires religious instruction**. Moreover, without neglecting in any way the training of children, one sees that present conditions render ever more urgent catechetical instruction, under the **form of the catechumenate**, for innumerable young people and adults who, touched by grace, discover little by little the face of Christ and feel the need of giving themselves to Him.

45. Our century is characterized by the **mass media or means of social communication**, and the first proclamation, catechesis or the further deepening of faith cannot do without these means, as we have already emphasized.

When they are put at the service of the Gospel, they are capable of increasing almost indefinitely the area in which the Word of God is heard; they enable the Good News to reach millions of people. The Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfect. It is through them that she proclaims "from the housetops"[72] the message of which she is the depositary. In them she **finds a modern and effective version of the pulpit**. Thanks to them she succeeds in speaking to the multitudes.

Nevertheless the use of the means of social communication for evangelization presents a challenge: through them the evangelical message should reach vast numbers of people, but with the capacity of piercing the conscience of each individual, of implanting itself in his heart as though he were the only person being addressed, with all his most individual and personal qualities, and evoke an entirely personal adherence and commitment.

46. For this reason, **side by side with the collective proclamation of the Gospel, the other form of transmission, the person-to-person one, remains valid and important.** The Lord often used it (for example, with Nicodemus, Zacchaeus, the Samaritan woman, Simon the Pharisee), and so did the apostles. **In the long run, is there any other way of handing on the Gospel than by transmitting to another person one's personal experience of faith?** It must not happen that the pressing need to proclaim the Good News to the multitudes should cause us to forget this form of proclamation whereby an individual's personal conscience is reached and touched by an entirely unique word that he receives from someone else. **We can never sufficiently praise those priests who through the sacrament of Penance or through pastoral dialogue show their readiness to guide people in the ways of the Gospel, to support them in their efforts, to raise them up if they have fallen, and always to assist them with discernment and availability.**

47. Yet, one can never sufficiently stress the fact that evangelization does not consist only of the preaching and teaching of a doctrine. For **evangelization must touch life: the natural life to which it gives a new meaning**, thanks to the evangelical perspectives that it reveals; and the **supernatural life**, which is **not the negation but the purification and elevation of the natural life.**

This supernatural life finds its living expression in the seven sacraments and in the admirable radiation of grace and holiness which they possess.

Evangelization thus exercises its full capacity when it achieves the most intimate relationship, or better still, a **permanent and unbroken intercommunication, between the Word and the sacraments**. In a certain sense it is a mistake to make a contrast between evangelization and sacramentalization, as is sometimes done. It is indeed true that a certain way of **administering the sacraments, without the solid support of catechesis regarding these same sacraments and a global catechesis, could end up by depriving them of their effectiveness to a great extent**. The role of evangelization is precisely to educate people in the faith in such a way as to lead each individual Christian to live the sacraments as true sacraments of faith- and not to receive them passively or reluctantly.

### Session 6, Page 29 – Quote from St. Catherine of Siena

1:40 “And, as soon as he had sinned, a tempestuous flood arose, which ever buffets him with its waves, bringing him weariness and trouble from himself, the devil, and the world. Everyone was drowned in the flood, because no one, with his own justice alone, could arrive at Eternal Life.”

3:40 “And so, wishing to remedy your great evils, I have given you the Bridge of My Son, in order that, passing across the flood, you may not be drowned, which flood is a the tempestuous sea of this dark life.”

4:35 “See the greatness thereof, for it reaches from Heaven to earth, that is, that the earth of your humanity is joined to the greatness of the Deity thereby. I say then that this Bridge reaches from Heaven to earth, and constitutes the union which I have made with man.”

5:34 “It was, therefore, necessary to join human nature with the height of My nature, the Eternal Deity, so that it might be sufficient to satisfy for the whole human race, so that human nature should sustain the punishment, and that the Divine nature, united with the human, should make acceptable the sacrifice of My only Son, offered to Me to take death from you and to give you life.”

6:38 “Why was this done? In order that man might come to his true happiness with the angels.”

7:43 “And observe, that it is not enough, in order that you should have life, that My Son should have made you this Bridge, unless you walk thereon.”

9:10 “It seems, oh, **Abyss of Charity**, as if you were mad with love of Your creature, as if You could not live without him, and yet You are our God who have no heed of us, Your greatness does not increase through our good, for You are unchangeable, and our evil causes You no harm, for You are the Supreme and Eternal Goodness.”

## Session 6, page 32

### EVANGELII NUNTIANDI Para 51 - 57

TO THE EPISCOPATE, TO THE CLERGY  
AND TO ALL THE FAITHFUL  
OF THE ENTIRE WORLD

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

51. **To reveal Jesus Christ and His Gospel** to those who do not know them has been, ever since the morning of Pentecost, the **fundamental program which the Church has taken on as received from her Founder**. The whole of the New Testament, and in a special way the Acts of the Apostles, bears witness to a privileged and in a sense exemplary moment of this missionary effort which will subsequently leave its mark on the whole history of the Church.

She carries out this first proclamation of Jesus Christ by a complex and diversified activity which is sometimes termed "**pre-evangelization**" but which is already evangelization in a true sense, although at its initial and still incomplete stage. An

almost indefinite range of means can be used for this purpose: explicit preaching, of course, but also art, the scientific approach, philosophical research and legitimate recourse to the sentiments of the human heart.

52. This first proclamation is addressed especially to those who have never heard the Good News of Jesus, or to children. But, as a result of the frequent situations of de-Christianization in our day, it also proves equally necessary for innumerable people who have been baptized but who live quite outside Christian life, for simple people who have a certain faith but an imperfect knowledge of the foundations of that faith, for intellectuals who feel the need to know Jesus Christ in a light different from the instruction they received as children, and for many others.

53. This first proclamation is also addressed to the immense sections of mankind who practice non-Christian religions. The Church respects and esteems these non-Christian religions because they are the living expression of the soul of vast groups of people. They carry within them the echo of thousands of years of searching for God, a quest which is incomplete but often made with great sincerity and righteousness of heart. They possess an impressive patrimony of deeply religious texts. They have taught generations of people how to pray. They are all impregnated with innumerable "seeds of the Word"[74] and can constitute a true "preparation for the Gospel,"[75] to quote a felicitous term used by the Second Vatican Council and borrowed from Eusebius of Caesarea.

Such a situation certainly raises complex and delicate questions that must be studied in the light of Christian Tradition and the Church's magisterium, in order to offer to the missionaries of today and of tomorrow new horizons in their contacts with non-Christian religions. We wish to point out, above all today, that neither respect and esteem for these religions nor the complexity of the questions raised is an invitation to the Church to withhold from these non-Christians the proclamation of Jesus Christ. **On the contrary the Church holds that these multitudes have the right to know the riches of the mystery**

of Christ [76 - *Cf. Eph 3:8*] - riches in which we believe that the whole of humanity can find, in unsuspected fullness, everything that it is gropingly searching for concerning God, man and his destiny, life and death, and truth. Even in the face of natural religious expressions most worthy of esteem, the **Church finds support in the fact that the religion of Jesus, which she proclaims through evangelization, objectively places man in relation with the plan of God, with His living presence and with His action**; she thus causes an encounter with the mystery of divine paternity that bends over towards humanity. In other words, **our religion effectively establishes with God an authentic and living relationship which the other religions do not succeed in doing**, even though they have, as it were, their arms stretched out towards heaven.

This is why the Church **keeps her missionary spirit alive**, and even wishes to intensify it in the moment of history in which we are living. She feels responsible before entire peoples. She has no rest so long as she has not done her best to proclaim the Good News of Jesus the Savior. She is always preparing new generations of apostles. Let us state this fact with joy at a time when there are not lacking those who think and even say that ardor and the apostolic spirit are exhausted, and that the time of the missions is now past. The Synod has replied that the missionary proclamation never ceases and that the Church will always be striving for the fulfillment of this proclamation.

54. Nevertheless the Church does not feel dispensed from paying unflagging attention also to those who have received the faith and who have been in contact with the Gospel often for generations. Thus she seeks to deepen, consolidate, nourish and make ever more mature the faith of those who are already called the faithful or believers, in order that they may be so still more.

This faith is nearly always today **exposed to secularism, even to militant atheism**. It is a faith exposed to trials and threats, and even more, **a faith besieged and actively opposed**. It runs the risk of perishing from suffocation or starvation if it is not fed and sustained each day. To evangelize must therefore very often be to give this necessary

food and sustenance to the faith of believers, especially through a catechesis full of Gospel vitality and in a language suited to people and circumstances.

The Church also has a lively solicitude for the Christians who are not in full communion with her. While preparing with them the **unity willed by Christ**, and precisely in order to **realize unity in truth**, she has the consciousness that she would be gravely lacking in her duty if she did not give witness before them of the fullness of the revelation whose deposit she guards.

55. Also significant is the preoccupation of the last Synod in regard to two spheres which are very different from one another but which at the same time are very close by reason of the challenge which they make to evangelization, each in its own way.

The first sphere is the one which can be called the **increase of unbelief in the modern world**. The Synod endeavored to describe this modern world: how many currents of thought, values and counter-values, latent aspirations or seeds of destruction, old convictions which disappear and new convictions which arise are covered by this generic name!

From the **spiritual point of view**, the modern world seems to be forever immersed in what a modern author has termed "the **drama of atheistic humanism**." [77 – *Henri de Lubac, Le drame de l'humanisme athee, ed. Spes, Paris, 1945*]

On the one hand one is forced to note in the very heart of this contemporary world the phenomenon which is becoming almost its most striking characteristic: **secularism**. We are **not speaking of secularization**, which is the effort, in itself just and legitimate and in no way incompatible with faith or religion, to discover in creation, in each thing or each happening in the universe, the laws which regulate them with a certain autonomy, but with the **inner conviction that the Creator has placed these laws there**. The last Council has in this sense affirmed the legitimate autonomy of culture and particularly of the

sciences.[78] Here we are thinking of a **true secularism**: a concept of the world according to which the latter is self-explanatory, **without any need for recourse to God, who thus becomes superfluous and an encumbrance**. This sort of secularism, in order to recognize the power of man, therefore ends up by **doing without God and even by denying Him**.

New forms of atheism seem to flow from it: **a man centered atheism**, no longer abstract and metaphysical but pragmatic, systematic and militant. Hand in hand with this atheistic secularism, we are daily faced, under the most diverse forms, with a consumer society, the pursuit of pleasure set up as the supreme value, a desire for power and domination, and discrimination of every kind: the inhuman tendencies of this **"humanism."**

In this same modern world, on the other hand, and this is a paradox, one cannot deny the existence of real steppingstones to Christianity, and of evangelical values at least in the form of a sense of emptiness or nostalgia. It would not be an exaggeration to say that **there exists a powerful and tragic appeal to be evangelized**.

56. The second sphere is that of those who do not practice. Today there is a **very large number of baptized people who for the most part have not formally renounced their Baptism but who are entirely indifferent to it and not living in accordance with it**. The phenomenon of the non-practicing is a very ancient one in the history of Christianity; it is the **result of a natural weakness, a profound inconsistency** which we unfortunately bear deep within us. Today however it shows certain new characteristics. It is often the result of the uprooting typical of our time. It also springs from the fact that **Christians live in close proximity with non-believers and constantly experience the effects of unbelief**. Furthermore, the non-practicing Christians of today, more so than those of previous periods, seek to explain and justify their position in the name of an interior religion, of personal independence or authenticity.

Thus we have **atheists and unbelievers on the one side** and **those who do not practice on the other**, and **both groups put up a considerable resistance to evangelization**. The resistance of the former takes the form of a certain refusal and an inability to grasp the new order of things, the new meaning of the world, of life and of history; such is not possible if one does not start from a divine absolute. The resistance of the second group takes the form of inertia and the slightly hostile attitude of the person who feels that he is one of the homily, who claims to know it all and to have tried it all and who no longer believes it.

**Atheistic secularism** and the **absence of religious practice** are found among adults and among the young, among the leaders of society and among the ordinary people, at all levels of education, and in both the old Churches and the young ones. The Church's evangelizing action cannot ignore these two worlds, nor must it come to a standstill when faced with them; **it must constantly seek the proper means and language for presenting, or representing, to them God's revelation and faith in Jesus Christ.**

57. Like Christ during the time of His preaching, like the Twelve on the morning of Pentecost, the Church too sees before her an immense multitude of people who need the Gospel and have a right to it, for God "**wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth.**"[79 – *1 TIM 2:4*]

**The Church is deeply aware of her duty to preach salvation to all.** Knowing that the Gospel message is not reserved to a small group of the initiated, the privileged or the elect, but is destined for everyone, she shares Christ's anguish at the sight of the wandering and exhausted crowds, "like sheep without a shepherd" and she often repeats His words: "I feel sorry for all these people." [80] But the Church is also conscious of the fact that, if the preaching of the Gospel is to be effective, she must address her message to the heart of the multitudes, to communities of the faithful whose action can and must reach others.

## Session 6, page 29

### Quotes from St. Catherine of Siena

<http://www.catholictreasury.info/books/dialogue/diag20.php>

#### A TREATISE OF DISCRETION

##### 7. How the road to Heaven being broken through the disobedience of Adam, God made of His Son a Bridge by which man could pass.

"Wherefore I have told you that I have made a Bridge of My Word, of My only-begotten Son, and this is the truth. I wish that you, My children, should know that the road was broken by the sin and disobedience of Adam, in such a way, that no one could arrive at Eternal Life.

"Wherefore men did not render Me glory in the way in which they ought to have, as they did not participate in that Good for which I had created them, and My truth was not fulfilled. This truth is that I have created man to My own image and similitude, in order that he might have Eternal Life, and might partake of Me, and taste My supreme and eternal sweetness and goodness. But, after sin had closed Heaven and bolted the doors of mercy, the soul of man produced thorns and prickly brambles, and My creature found in himself rebellion against himself.

"And the flesh immediately began to war against the Spirit, and, losing the state of innocence, became a foul animal, and all created things rebelled against man, whereas they would have been obedient to him, had he remained in the state in which I had placed him. He, not remaining therein, transgressed My obedience, and merited eternal death in soul and body. <sup>1</sup>And, as soon as he had sinned, a tempestuous flood arose, which ever buffets him with its waves, bringing him weariness and trouble from himself, the devil, and the world. Every one was drowned in the flood, because no one, with his own justice alone, could arrive at Eternal Life. *[reality of sin]*

<sup>2</sup>"And so, wishing to remedy your great evils, I [God] have given you the Bridge of My Son, in order that, passing across the flood, you may not be drowned, which flood is the tempestuous sea of this dark life. See, therefore, under what obligations the creature is to Me, and how ignorant he is, not to take the remedy which I have offered, but to be willing to drown."

##### 8. How God induces the soul to look at the greatness of this Bridge, inasmuch as it reaches from earth to Heaven.

"Open, my daughter, the eye of your intellect, and you will see the accepted and the ignorant, the imperfect, and also the perfect who follow Me in truth, so that you may grieve over the damnation of the ignorant, and rejoice over the perfection of My beloved servants.

"You will see further how those bear themselves who walk in the light, and those who walk in the darkness. I also wish you to look at the Bridge of My only-begotten Son, and <sup>3</sup>see the greatness thereof, for it reaches from Heaven to earth, that is, that the earth of your humanity is joined to the greatness of the Deity thereby. I say then that this **Bridge** reaches from Heaven to earth, and constitutes the union

which I have made with man.

"This was necessary, in order to reform the road which was broken, as I said to you, in order that man should pass through the bitterness of the world, and arrive at life; but the Bridge could not be made of earth sufficiently large to span the flood and give you Eternal Life, because the earth of human nature was not sufficient to satisfy for guilt, to remove the stain of Adam's sin. Which stain corrupted the whole human race and gave out a stench, as I have said to you above.

"It was, therefore, necessary to join human nature with the height of My nature, the Eternal Deity, so that it might be sufficient to satisfy for the whole human race, so that human nature should sustain the punishment, and that the Divine nature, united with the human, should make acceptable the sacrifice of My only Son, offered to Me to take death from you and to give you life.

"So the height of the Divinity, humbled to the earth, and joined with your humanity, made the Bridge and reformed the road. <sup>5</sup>Why was this done? In order that man might come to his true happiness with the angels. <sup>6</sup>And observe, that it is not enough, in order that you should have life, that My Son should have made you this Bridge, unless you walk thereon." *[a bridge is no good unless you cross it. E.g. Prince Edward Island 10 mile bridge]*

9. How this soul prays God to show her those who cross by the aforesaid Bridge, and those who do not.

Then this soul exclaimed with ardent love, -- "Oh, inestimable Charity, sweet above all sweetness! Who would not be inflamed by such great love? What heart can help breaking at such tenderness? <sup>7</sup> It seems, oh, Abyss of Charity, as if you were mad with love of Your creature, as if You could not live without him, and yet You are our God who have no heed of us, Your greatness does not increase through our good, for You are unchangeable, and our evil causes You no harm, for You are the Supreme and Eternal Goodness. *[immense Love of God]*

"What moves You to do us such mercy through pure love, and on account of no debt that You owed us, or need that You had of us? We are rather Your guilty and malignant debtors. Wherefore, if I understand aright, Oh, Supreme and Eternal Truth, I am the thief and You have been punished for me. For I see Your Word, Your Son, fastened and nailed to the Cross, of which You have made me a Bridge, as You have shown me, Your miserable servant, for which reason, my heart is bursting, and yet cannot burst, through the hunger and the desire which it has conceived towards You.

"I remember, my Lord, that You were willing to show me who are those who go by the Bridge and those who do not; should it please Your goodness to manifest this to me, willingly would I see and hear it."

## Prayer of Commitment

I COMMIT MYSELF TO DOING MY VERY BEST TO BRING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST TO  
\_\_\_\_\_ *[name of person]* OVER THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS.

I WILL DO MY VERY BEST TO PRAY EVERY DAY FOR HIS/HER SALVATION, FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE THE FAITH WITH HIM/HER, AND FOR HIS/HER INITIAL OR DEEPER CONVERSION.

BEFORE ALL THOSE PRESENT AND THE LORD HIMSELF, I COMMIT TO MAKING THIS A PRIORITY IN MY LIFE. I WILL INVEST IN BUILDING AND DEEPENING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS PERSON.

I WILL BE GENEROUS WITH THEM IN TERMS OF RESOURCES AND FINANCES, AND ESPECIALLY WITH MY TIME. I KNOW THAT THIS WILL REQUIRE ME TO SACRIFICE, BUT I JOYFULLY OFFER IT UP FOR THE SAKE OF LEADING HIM/HER CLOSER TO JESUS CHRIST.

OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, I WILL DEVELOP A PLAN FOR HOW I WILL GROW OUR RELATIONSHIP, FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE THE FAITH, AND LOOK FOR EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENTS THAT WE CAN PARTICIPATE IN TOGETHER.

BEFORE ALL OF MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST, AND TRUSTING IN HIS GRACES, I COMMIT TO TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT GOD GIVES ME FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH THEM.

Amen

**Two Person Plan for:**

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

How will I strengthen our relationship? (3 concrete ideas)

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What do I believe is the biggest obstacle to his/her conversion?

---

---

How will I be an instrument of God in removing this?

---

---

What are practical ideas for sharing the faith with this individual?

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---

What sacrifices will I make in order to be able to share the faith with this person?

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---

Which forms of penance will I offer for the conversion of his/her soul?

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What books, videos, brochures, websites, etc. might be helpful for this person?

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How can I better form myself as an evangelist in order to effectively share the Gospel with this individual?

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