

Relit the Heart of Evangelization
Suggested Further Reading References

'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 7 through 12 as follows:

7. Evangelii Nuntiandi Paras 60-68 with Bonus 69-75
8. Redemptoris missio – Paras 4-11
9. Redemptoris missio – Paras 21-30 Chap III – The Holy Spirit: The Principal Agent of Mission
10. Redemptoris missio – Paras 31-36
11. Redemptoris missio – Paras 31-36 – same as session 10: Chap IV – The Vast Horizons of the Mission Ad Gentes
12. Redemptoris missio – Paras 87-91: Chap VIII – **Missionary Spirituality**

Supplemental Materials include:

- a. In session 7, Pope Francis Evangelii Gaudium Para 46 referenced on Workbook Page 35
- b. In session 8, Evangelii Nuntiandi Para 14 quoted on Workbook Page 37
- c. In session 10, Hierarchy of Truths and additional coverage of the **Kerygma** as well as "**what should you pray for?**"; "**Sharing the Gospel is Better than Flossing**"; and "**The Science of Storytelling**"
- d. In session 11, "10 Principles of Debate"
- e. In session 12, Catechesis and the Initial Proclamation of the Gospel – Catechesi Tradendae Paras 18&19

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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).*

Session 7, page 36 Para 60 to 68 & Bonus 69 to 75

EVANGELII NUNTIANDI

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

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

Paragraphs 60 to 68

60. The observation that the Church has been sent out and given a mandate to evangelize the world should awaken in us two convictions.

The first is this: **evangelization is for no one an individual and isolated act**; it is one that is **deeply ecclesial** [*pertaining to a church or its functions, teachings, or organization*]. When the most obscure preacher, catechist or pastor in the most distant land preaches the Gospel, gathers his little community together or administers a sacrament, even alone, he is carrying out an ecclesial act, and his action is certainly attached to the evangelizing activity of the whole Church by institutional relationships, but also by profound invisible links in the order of grace. This presupposes that he acts not in virtue of a mission which he attributes to himself or by a personal inspiration, but in union with the mission of the Church and in her name.

From this flows the second conviction: if each individual evangelizes in the name of the Church, who herself does so by virtue of a mandate from the Lord, no evangelizer is the absolute master of his evangelizing action, with a discretionary power to carry it out in accordance with individualistic criteria and perspectives; he acts in communion with the Church and her pastors.

We have remarked that the Church is entirely and completely evangelizing. This means that, in the whole world and in each part of the world where she is present, the Church feels responsible for the task of spreading the Gospel.

61. Brothers and sons and daughters, at this stage of our reflection, we wish to pause with you at a question which is particularly important at the present time. In the celebration of the liturgy, in their witness before judges and executioners and in their apologetical texts, the first Christians readily expressed their deep faith in the Church by

describing her as being spread throughout the universe. They were fully conscious of belonging to a large community which neither space nor time can limit: From the just Abel right to the last of the elect,[85] "indeed to the ends of the earth,[86] "to the end of time." [87]

This is how the Lord wanted His Church to be: universal, a great tree whose branches shelter the birds of the air,[88] a net which catches fish of every kind[89] or which Peter drew in filled with one hundred and fifty-three big fish,[90] a flock which a single shepherd pastures.[91] A universal Church without boundaries or frontiers except, alas, those of the heart and mind of sinful man.

62. Nevertheless this universal Church is in practice incarnate in the individual Churches made up of such or such an actual part of mankind, speaking such and such a language, heirs of a cultural patrimony, of a vision of the world, of an historical past, of a particular human substratum.

Receptivity to the wealth of the individual Church corresponds to a special sensitivity of modern man.

Let us be very careful not to conceive of the universal Church as the sum, or, if one can say so, the more or less anomalous *[inconsistent with or deviating from what is usual, normal, or expected; of uncertain nature or classification; marked by incongruity or contradiction]* federation of essentially different individual Churches. In the mind of the Lord the Church is universal by vocation and mission, but when she puts down her roots in a variety of cultural, social and human terrains, she takes on different external expressions and appearances in each part of the world.

Thus each individual Church that would voluntarily cut itself off from the universal Church would lose its relationship to God's plan and would be impoverished in its ecclesial dimension. But, at the same time, a Church *toto orbe diffusa* *[dispersed throughout the world]* would become an abstraction if she did not take body and

life precisely through the individual Churches. Only continual attention to these two poles of the Church will enable us to perceive the richness of this relationship between the universal Church and the individual Churches.

63. The individual Churches, intimately built up not only of people but also of aspirations, of riches and limitations, of ways of praying, of loving, of looking at life and the world, which distinguish this or that human gathering, have the task of assimilating the essence of the Gospel message and of transposing it, without the slightest betrayal of its essential truth, into the language that these particular people understand, **then** of proclaiming it in this language.

The transposition has to be done with the discernment, seriousness, respect and competence which the matter calls for in the field of liturgical expression, [92] and in the areas of catechesis, theological formulation, secondary ecclesial structures, and ministries. And the word "language" should be understood here less in the semantic or literary sense than in the sense which one may call anthropological *[science that deals with the origins, physical and cultural development, biological characteristics, and social customs and beliefs of humankind]* and cultural.

The question is undoubtedly a delicate one. Evangelization loses much of its force and effectiveness if it does not take into consideration the actual people to whom it is addresses, if it does not use their language, their signs and symbols, if it does not answer the questions they ask, and if it does not have an impact on their concrete life. But on the other hand, evangelization risks losing its power and disappearing altogether if one empties or adulterates its content under the pretext of translating it; if, in other words, one sacrifices this reality and destroys the unity without which there is no universality, out of a wish to adapt a universal reality to a local situation. Now, only a Church which preserves the awareness of her universality and shows that she is in fact universal is capable of having a message which can be heard by all, regardless of regional frontiers.

Legitimate attention to individual Churches cannot fail to enrich the Church. Such attention is indispensable and urgent. It responds to the very deep aspirations of peoples and human communities to find their own identity ever more clearly.

64. But this enrichment requires that the individual Churches should keep their profound openness towards the universal Church. It is quite remarkable, moreover, that the most simple Christians, the ones who are most faithful to the Gospel and most open to the true meaning of the Church, have a completely spontaneous sensitivity to this universal dimension. They instinctively and very strongly feel the need for it, they easily recognize themselves in such a dimension. They feel with it and suffer very deeply within themselves when, in the name of theories which they do not understand, they are forced to accept a Church deprived of this universality, a regionalist Church, with no horizon.

As history in fact shows, whenever an individual Church has cut itself off from the universal Church and from its living and visible center- sometimes with the best of intentions, with theological, sociological, political or pastoral arguments, or even in the desire for a certain freedom of movement or action- it has escaped only with great difficulty (if indeed it has escaped) from two equally serious dangers. The first danger is that of a withering isolationism, and then, before long, of a crumbling away, with each of its cells breaking away from it just as it itself has broken away from the central nucleus. The second danger is that of losing its freedom when, being cut off from the center and from the other Churches which gave it strength and energy, it finds itself all alone and a prey to the most varied forces of slavery and exploitation.

The more an individual Church is attached to the universal Church by solid bonds of communion, in charity and loyalty, in receptiveness to the Magisterium of Peter, in the unity of the *lex orandi [the law of prayer]* which is also the *lex credendi, [the law of belief]* in the desire for unity with all the other Churches which make up the whole- the

more such a Church will be capable of translating the treasure of faith into the legitimate variety of expressions of the profession of faith, of prayer and worship, of Christian life and conduct and of the spiritual influence on the people among which it dwells. The more will it also be truly evangelizing, that is to say, capable of drawing upon the universal patrimony in order to enable its own people to profit from it, and capable too of communicating to the universal Church the experience and the life of this people, for the benefit of all.

65. It was precisely in this sense that at the end of the last Synod we spoke clear words full of paternal affection, insisting on the role of Peter's Successor as a visible, living and dynamic principle of the unity between the Churches and thus of the universality of the one Church.^[93] We also insisted on the grave responsibility incumbent upon us, but which we share with our Brothers in the Episcopate, of preserving unaltered the content of the Catholic faith which the Lord entrusted to the apostles. While being translated into all expressions, this content must be neither impaired nor mutilated. While being clothed with the outward forms proper to each people, and made explicit by theological expression which takes account of differing cultural, social and even racial milieu, it must remain the content of the Catholic faith just exactly as the ecclesial magisterium has received it and transmits it.

66. The whole Church therefore is called upon to evangelize, and yet within her we have different evangelizing tasks to accomplish. This diversity of services in the unity of the same mission makes up the richness and beauty of evangelization. We shall briefly recall these **tasks**.

First, we would point out in the pages of the Gospel the insistence with which the Lord entrusts to the apostles the task of proclaiming the Word. He chose them, ^[94] trained them during several years of intimate company,^[95] constituted^[96] and sent them out^[97] as authorized witnesses and teachers of the message of salvation. And the

Twelve in their turn sent out their successors who, in the apostolic line, continue to preach the Good News.

67. The Successor of Peter is thus, by the will of Christ, entrusted with the preeminent ministry of teaching the revealed truth. The New Testament often shows Peter "filled with the Holy Spirit" speaking in the name of all."^[98] It is precisely for this reason that St. Leo the Great describes him as he who has merited the primacy of the apostolate."^[99] This is also why the voice of the Church shows the Pope "at the highest point- in apice [*apex*], in specula [*height*]- of the apostolate."^[100] The Second Vatican Council wished to reaffirm this when it declared that "**Christ's mandate to preach the Gospel to every creature** (cf. Mk. 16:15) primarily and immediately concerns the bishops with Peter and under Peter."^[101]

The full, supreme and universal power"^[102] which Christ gives to His Vicar for the pastoral government of His Church is this especially exercised by the Pope in the activity of preaching and causing to be preached the Good News of salvation.

68. In union with the Successor of Peter, the bishops, who are successors of the apostles, receive through the power of their episcopal ordination the authority to teach the revealed truth in the Church. They are teachers of the faith.

Associated with the bishops in the ministry of evangelization and responsible by a special title are those who through priestly ordination "**act in the person of Christ**."^[103] They are educators of the People of God in the faith and preachers, while at the same time being ministers of the Eucharist and of the other sacraments.

We pastors are therefore invited to take note of this duty, more than any other members of the Church. What identifies our priestly service, gives a profound unity to the thousand and one tasks which claim our attention day by day and throughout our lives, and confers a distinct character on our activities, is this aim, ever present in all our action: to proclaim the Gospel of God.^[104]

A mark of our identity which no doubts ought to encroach upon and no objection eclipse is this: as pastors, we have been chosen by the mercy of the Supreme Pastor,[105] in spite of our inadequacy, to proclaim with authority the Word of God, to assemble the scattered People of God, to feed *[unusual use of this word – presume “feed” is the correct use of the word, not ‘ deed’ or ‘seed’?]* this People with the signs of the action of Christ which are the sacraments, to set this People on the road to salvation, to maintain it in that unity of which we are, at different levels, active and living instruments, and unceasingly to **keep this community gathered around Christ faithful to its deepest vocation**. And **when we do all these things, within our human limits and by the grace of God, it is a work of evangelization that we are carrying out**. This includes ourself *[ourselves]* as Pastor of the universal Church, our brother bishops at the head of the individual Churches, priests and deacons united with their bishops and whose assistants they are, by a communion which has its source in the sacrament of Orders and in the charity of the Church.

Additional coverage of: Religious, Lay People, Family, the Young, Laity, Interior Attitudes, & Holy Spirit

69. **Religious**, for their part, find in their **consecrated life a privileged means of effective evangelization**. At the deepest level of their being they are caught Up in the dynamism of the Church's life, which is thirsty for the **divine Absolute** and **called to holiness**. It is to this holiness that they bear witness. They embody the Church in her desire to give herself completely to the radical demands of the beatitudes. By their lives they are a **sign of total availability to God, the Church and the brethren**.

As such they have a special importance in the **context of the witness** which, as we have said, is of prime importance in evangelization. At the same time as being a challenge to the world and to the Church herself, this silent witness of poverty and abnegation, of purity and sincerity, of self-sacrifice in obedience, can become an eloquent witness

capable of touching also non-Christians who have good will and are sensitive to certain values.

In this perspective one perceives the **role played in evangelization by religious men and women consecrated to prayer, silence, penance and sacrifice**. Other religious, in great numbers, give themselves directly to the proclamation of Christ. Their missionary activity depends clearly on the hierarchy and must be coordinated with the pastoral plan which the latter adopts. But who does not see the immense contribution that these religious have brought and continue to bring to evangelization? Thanks to their consecration they are eminently willing and free to leave everything and to go and proclaim the Gospel even to the ends of the earth. They are enterprising and their apostolate is often marked by an originality, by a genius that demands admiration. They are generous: often they are found at the outposts of the mission, and they take the greatest of risks for their health and their very lives. Truly the Church owes them much.

70. **Lay people**, whose particular vocation places them in the midst of the world and in charge of the most varied temporal tasks, must for this very reason exercise a very special form of evangelization.

Their primary and immediate task is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community- this is the specific role of the pastors- but to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media. It also includes other realities which are open to evangelization, such as human love, the family, the education of children and adolescents, professional work, suffering. The more Gospel-inspired lay people there are engaged in these realities, clearly involved in them, competent to promote them and conscious that they must exercise to the full their Christian powers which are often buried and suffocated, the more these realities will be at the service of the kingdom of

God and therefore of salvation in Jesus Christ, without in any way losing or sacrificing their human content but rather pointing to a transcendent dimension which is often disregarded.

71. One cannot fail to stress the **evangelizing action of the family** in the evangelizing apostolate of the laity.

At different moments in the Church's history and also in the Second Vatican Council, the family has well deserved the beautiful name of "**domestic Church**."^[106] This means that there should be found in every Christian family the various aspects of the entire Church. Furthermore, the family, like the Church, ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted and from which the Gospel radiates.

In a family which is conscious of this mission, all the members evangelize and are evangelized. The parents not only communicate the Gospel to their children, but from their children they can themselves receive the same Gospel as deeply lived by them. And such a family becomes the evangelizer of many other families, and of the neighborhood of which it forms part. Families resulting from a mixed marriage also have the duty of proclaiming Christ to the children in the fullness of the consequences of a common Baptism; they have moreover the difficult task of becoming builders of unity.

72. Circumstances invite us to make special mention of **the young**. Their increasing number and growing presence in society and likewise the problems assailing them should awaken in every one the desire to offer them with zeal and intelligence the Gospel ideal as something to be known and lived. And on the other hand, young people who are well trained in faith and prayer must become more and more the apostles of youth. The Church counts greatly on their contribution, and we ourselves have often manifested our full confidence in them.

73. Hence the **active presence of the laity** in the temporal realities takes on all its importance. One cannot, however, neglect or forget the other dimension: the laity can also feel themselves called, or be called, to work with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community for its growth and life, by exercising a great variety of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord is pleased to give them.

We cannot but experience a great inner joy when we see so many pastors, religious and lay people, fired with their mission to evangelize, seeking ever more suitable ways of proclaiming the Gospel effectively. We encourage the openness which the Church is showing today in this direction and with this solicitude. It is an openness to meditation first of all, and then to ecclesial ministries capable of renewing and strengthening the evangelizing vigor of the Church.

It is certain that, side by side with the ordained ministries, whereby certain people are appointed pastors and consecrate themselves in a special way to the service of the community, the Church recognizes the place of non-ordained ministries which are able to offer a particular service to the Church.

A glance at the origins of the Church is very illuminating, and gives the benefit of an early experience in the matter of ministries. It was an experience which was all the more valuable in that it enabled the Church to consolidate herself and to grow and spread. Attention to the sources however has to be complemented by attention to the present needs of mankind and of the Church. To drink at these ever inspiring sources without sacrificing anything of their values, and at the same time to know how to adapt oneself to the demands and needs of today- these are the criteria which will make it possible to seek wisely and to discover the ministries which the Church needs and which many of her members will gladly embrace for the sake of ensuring greater vitality in the ecclesial community. These ministries will have a real pastoral value to the extent that they are established with absolute respect for unity and adhering to the directives of the pastors, who are the ones who are responsible for the Church's unity and the builders thereof.

These ministries, apparently new but closely tied up with the Church's living experience down the centuries - such as catechists, directors of prayer and chant, Christians devoted to the service of God's Word or to assisting their brethren in need, the heads of small communities, or other persons charged with the responsibility of apostolic movements- these ministries are valuable for the establishment, life, and growth of the Church, and for her capacity to influence her surroundings and to reach those who are remote from her. We owe also our special esteem to all the lay people who accept to consecrate a part of their time, their energies, and sometimes their entire lives, to the service of the missions.

A serious preparation is needed for all workers for evangelization. Such preparation is all the more necessary for those who devote themselves to the ministry of the Word. Being animated by the conviction, ceaselessly deepened, of the greatness and riches of the Word of God, those who have the mission of transmitting it must give the maximum attention to the dignity, precision and adaptation of their language. Everyone knows that the art of speaking takes on today a very great importance. How would preachers and catechists be able to neglect this?

We earnestly desire that in each individual Church the bishops should be vigilant concerning the adequate formation of all the ministers of the Word. This serious preparation will increase in them the indispensable assurance and also the enthusiasm to proclaim today Jesus Christ.

74. We would not wish to end this encounter with our beloved brethren and sons and daughters without a pressing appeal concerning the **interior attitudes** which must animate those who work for evangelization.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the name of the Apostles Peter and Paul, we wish to exhort all those who, thanks to the charisms of the Holy Spirit and to the

mandate of the Church, are true evangelizers to be worthy of this vocation, to exercise it without the reticence of doubt or fear, and not to neglect the conditions that will make this evangelization not only possible but also active and fruitful. These, among many others, are the fundamental conditions which we consider it important to emphasize.

75. Evangelization will never be possible without the action of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit descends on Jesus of Nazareth at the moment of His baptism when the voice of the Father- "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased"[107]- manifests in an external way the election of Jesus and His mission. Jesus is "led by the Spirit" to experience in the desert the decisive combat and the supreme test before beginning this mission.[108] It is "in the power of the Spirit"[109] that He returns to Galilee and begins His preaching at Nazareth, applying to Himself the passage of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." And He proclaims: "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled." [110] To the disciples whom He was about to send forth He says, breathing on them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." [111]

In fact, it is only after the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost that the apostles depart to all the ends of the earth in order to begin the great work of the Church's evangelization. Peter explains this event as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel: "I will pour out my spirit." [112] Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit so that he can speak to the people about Jesus, the Son of God. [113] Paul too is filled with the Holy Spirit [114] before dedicating himself to his apostolic ministry, as is Stephen when he is chosen for the ministry of service and later on for the witness of blood. [115] The Spirit, who causes Peter, Paul and the Twelve to speak, and who inspires the words that they are to utter, also comes down "on those who heard the word." [116]

It is in the "consolation of the Holy Spirit" that the Church increases. [117] The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. It is He who explains to the faithful the deep meaning of the teaching of Jesus and of His mystery. It is the Holy Spirit who, today just as at the beginning of the Church, acts in every evangelizer who allows himself to be possessed

and led by Him. The Holy Spirit places on his lips the words which he could not find by himself, and at the same time the Holy Spirit predisposes the soul of the hearer to be open and receptive to the Good News and to the kingdom being proclaimed.

Techniques of evangelization are good, but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit. The most perfect preparation of the evangelizer has no effect without the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit the most convincing dialectic has no power over the heart of man. Without Him the most highly developed schemas resting on a sociological or psychological basis are quickly seen to be quite valueless.

We live in the Church at a privileged moment of the Spirit. Everywhere people are trying to know Him better, as the Scripture reveals Him. They are happy to place themselves under His inspiration. They are gathering about Him; they want to let themselves be led by Him. Now if the Spirit of God has a preeminent place in the whole life of the Church, it is in her evangelizing mission that He is most active. It is not by chance that the great inauguration of evangelization took place on the morning of Pentecost, under the inspiration of the Spirit.

It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: it is He who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is He who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood.[118] But it can equally be said that He is the goal of evangelization: He alone stirs up the new creation, the new humanity of which evangelization is to be the result, with that unity in variety which evangelization wishes to achieve within the Christian community. Through the Holy Spirit the Gospel penetrates to the heart of the world, for it is He who causes people to discern the signs of the times- signs willed by God- which evangelization reveals and puts to use within history.

The Bishops' Synod of 1974, which insisted strongly on the place of the Holy Spirit in evangelization, also expressed the desire that pastors and theologians- and we would also say the faithful marked by the seal of the Spirit by Baptism- should study more thoroughly the nature and manner of the Holy Spirit's action in evangelization today. This is our desire too, and we exhort all evangelizers, whoever they may be, to pray without ceasing to the Holy Spirit with faith and fervor and to let themselves prudently be guided by Him as the decisive inspirer of their plans, their initiatives and their evangelizing activity.

Supplement Paragraph 46 from Pope Francis – *Evangelii Gaudium*, Page 35 in Workbook

1. **A Church which “goes forth” is a Church whose doors are open.** Going out to others in order to reach the fringes of humanity does not mean rushing out aimlessly into the world. Often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others, to stop rushing from one thing to another and to remain with someone who has faltered along the way. At times we have to be like the father of the prodigal son, who always keeps his door open so that when the son returns, he can readily pass through it.

Session 8, page 41 Para 4 to 11 Redemptoris Missio

From Page 37 Quote of Paul VI: *Evangelii Nuntiandi* Para 14

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] 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] 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.

Page 38 [@video 12:15]

It's not just about a right program

- **It's about the way we think**
- **It's about the way we act**
- **It's about our perspective**

[@ 13:35] [bottom of Page 38] **Reasons we need to share our faith**

1. **We love Jesus – if we love someone, we tell others**
2. **We love other people – want to give them the very best**
3. **This is what Christ told us to do – Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations – the Great Commission**
4. **Salvation is at stake**

There are many reasons to evangelize:

- **Christ told us to,**
- **It is an act of Love,**
- **We want to share what we have received, and**
- **The last several Holy Fathers have encouraged us to do so.**

But, the greatest reason – and one which has been lost by many in this generation – is that our choices and responses to God in this life have eternal consequences. Ultimately, evangelization is directed toward leading a person away from eternal separation from God [hell] and point them toward eternal friendship with Him [heaven].

The Core of the Message is Salvation – Good News means nothing if we don't know the Bad News; Communion or Separation from God for all eternity

Ioannes Paulus PP. II

Redemptoris missio Paraq 4 to 11

On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate
1990.12.07

CHAPTER I - JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY SAVIOR – Paragraph 4-11

4. In my first encyclical, in which I set forth the program of my Pontificate, I said that "**the Church's fundamental function in every age, and particularly in ours, is to direct man's gaze, to point the awareness and experience of the whole of humanity toward the mystery of Christ.**"⁴

The **Church's universal mission is born of faith in Jesus Christ**, as is stated in our Trinitarian profession of faith: "I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father.... For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man."⁵ The redemption event brings salvation to all, "for each one is included in the mystery of the redemption and with each one Christ has united himself forever through this mystery."⁶ It is only in faith that the Church's mission can be understood and only in faith that it finds its basis.

Nevertheless, also as a result of the changes which have taken place in modern times and the spread of new theological ideas, some people wonder: *Is missionary work among non-Christians still relevant?* Has it not been replaced by **inter-religious dialogue**? Is not human development an adequate goal of the Church's mission? Does not respect for conscience and for freedom exclude all efforts at conversion? Is it not possible to attain salvation in any religion? Why then should there be missionary activity?

"No one comes to the Father, but by me" (Jn 14:6)

5. If we go back to the beginnings of the Church, we find a clear affirmation that **Christ is the one Savior of all**, the only one able to reveal God and lead to God. In reply to the Jewish religious authorities who question the apostles about the healing of the lame man, Peter says: "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well.... And there is salvation in no one else, for **there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved**" (Acts 4:10, 12). This statement, which was made to the Sanhedrin, has a universal value, since for all people—Jews and Gentiles alike - **salvation can only come from Jesus Christ.**

The universality of this salvation in Christ is asserted throughout the New Testament. St. Paul acknowledges the risen Christ as the Lord. He writes: "Although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth - as indeed there are many 'gods' and many 'lords' - yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1 Cor 8:5-6). **One God and one Lord are asserted** by way of contrast to the multitude of "gods" and "lords" commonly accepted. Paul reacts against the polytheism of the religious environment of his time and emphasizes what is characteristic of the Christian faith: **belief in one God** and in one Lord sent by God.

In the Gospel of St. John, this salvific universality of Christ embraces all the aspects of his mission of grace, truth and revelation: the Word is "**the true light that enlightens every man**" (Jn 1:9). And again, "no one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (Jn 1:18; cf. Mt 11:27). God's revelation becomes definitive and complete through his only-begotten Son: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom he also created the world" (Heb 1:1-2; cf. Jn 14:6). In this definitive Word of his revelation, God has made himself known in the fullest possible way. He has revealed to mankind *who he is*. This definitive self-revelation of God is the fundamental reason why the Church is missionary by her very nature. She cannot do other than proclaim the Gospel, that is, the fullness of the truth which God has enabled us to know about himself.

Christ is the one mediator between God and mankind: "**For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth**" (1 Tm 2:5-7; cf. Heb 4:14-16). No one, therefore, can enter into communion with God except through Christ, by the working of the Holy Spirit. Christ's one, universal mediation, far from being an obstacle on the journey toward God, is the way established by God himself, a fact of which Christ is fully aware. Although participated forms of mediation of different kinds and degrees are not excluded, they acquire meaning and value *only* from Christ's own mediation, and they cannot be understood as parallel or complementary to his.

6. To introduce any sort of separation between the Word and Jesus Christ is contrary to the Christian faith. St. John clearly states that the Word, who "was in the beginning with God," is the very one who "became flesh" (Jn 1:2, 14). Jesus is the Incarnate Word—a single and indivisible person. One cannot separate Jesus from the Christ or speak of a "Jesus of history" who would differ from the "**Christ of faith.**" The Church acknowledges and confesses Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16): Christ is none other than Jesus of Nazareth: he is the Word of God made man for the salvation of all. In Christ "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (Col 2:9) and "from his fullness have we all received" (Jn 1:16). The "only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father" (Jn 1:18) is "the beloved Son, in whom we have redemption.... For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his Cross" (Col 1:13-14, 19-20). It is precisely this uniqueness of Christ which gives him an absolute and universal

significance, whereby, while belonging to history, he remains history's center and goal:7 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rv 22:13).

Thus, although it is legitimate and helpful to consider the various aspects of the **mystery of Christ**, we must **never lose sight of its unity**. In the process of discovering and appreciating the manifold gifts-especially the spiritual treasures-that God has bestowed on every people, we cannot separate those gifts from **Jesus Christ**, who is **at the center of God's plan of salvation**. Just as "by his incarnation the Son of God united himself in some sense with every human being," so too "we are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in the Paschal Mystery in a manner known to God."⁸ God's plan is "**to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth**" (Eph 1:10).

[New International Version](#)

to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment--to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

[New Living Translation](#)

And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ--everything in heaven and on earth.

[English Standard Version](#)

as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Faith in Christ Is Directed to Man's Freedom

7. The urgency of missionary activity derives from the *radical newness of life* brought by Christ and lived by his followers. This new life is a gift from God, and people are asked to accept and develop it, if they wish to realize the fullness of their vocation in conformity to Christ. The whole New Testament is a hymn to the new life of those who believe in Christ and live in his Church. Salvation in Christ, as witnessed to and proclaimed by the Church, is God's self-communication: "**It is love which not only creates the good, but also grants participation in the very life of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For he who loves, desires to give himself.**"⁹

God offers mankind this newness of life. "Can one reject Christ and everything that he has brought about in the history of mankind? Of course one can. **Man is free**. He can say 'no' to God. He can say 'no' to Christ. But the fundamental question remains: Is it legitimate to do this? And what would make it legitimate?"¹⁰

8. In the modern world there is a tendency to reduce man to his horizontal dimension alone. But without an openness to the Absolute, what does man become? The answer to this question is found in the experience of every individual, but it is also written in the history of humanity with the blood shed in the name of ideologies or by political regimes which have sought to build a "new humanity" without God.¹¹

Moreover, the Second Vatican Council replies to those concerned with safeguarding freedom of conscience: "**The human person has a right to religious freedom....** All should have such

immunity from coercion by individuals, or by groups, or by any human power, that no one should be forced to act against his conscience in religious matters, nor prevented from acting according to his conscience, whether in private or in public, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits."¹²

Proclaiming Christ and bearing witness to him when done in a way that respects consciences, does not violate freedom. Faith demands a free adherence on the part of man, but at the same time faith must also be offered to him, because the "multitudes have the right to know the riches of the mystery of Christ-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.... 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."¹³ But it must also be stated, again with the Council, that "in accordance with their dignity as persons, equipped with reason and free will and endowed with personal responsibility, all are impelled by their own nature and are bound by a moral obligation to seek truth, above all religious truth. They are further bound to hold to the truth once it is known, and to regulate their whole lives by its demands."¹⁴

The Church As Sign and Instrument of Salvation

9. The **first beneficiary of salvation is the Church**. Christ won the Church for himself at the price of his own blood and made the Church his co-worker in the salvation of the world. Indeed, Christ dwells within the Church. She is his Bride. It is he who causes her to grow. **He carries out his mission through her.**

The Council makes frequent reference to the Church's role in the salvation of mankind. While acknowledging that God loves all people and grants them the possibility of being saved (cf. 1 Tm 2:4),¹⁵ the Church believes that God has established Christ as the one mediator and that she herself has been established as the universal sacrament of salvation. ¹⁶ "To this catholic unity of the people of God, therefore,...all are called, and they belong to it or are ordered to it in various ways, whether they be Catholic faithful or others who believe in Christ or finally all people everywhere who by the grace of God are called to salvation."¹⁷ It is necessary to keep these two truths together, namely, the real possibility of salvation in Christ for all mankind and the necessity of the Church for salvation. Both these truths help us to understand the *one mystery of salvation*, so that we can come to know God's mercy and our own responsibility. **Salvation, which always remains a gift of the Holy Spirit, requires man's cooperation, both to save himself and to save others.** This is God's will, and this is why he established the Church and made her a part of his plan of salvation. Referring to "this messianic people," the Council says; "It has been set up by Christ as a communion of life, love and truth; by him too it is taken up as the instrument of salvation for all, and sent on a mission to the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth."¹⁸

Salvation in Christ Is Offered to All

10. The **universality of salvation** means that it is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church. **Since salvation is offered to all, it must be made**

concretely available to all. But it is clear that today, as in the past, many people do not have an opportunity to come to know or accept the gospel revelation or to enter the Church. The social and cultural conditions in which they live do not permit this, and frequently they have been brought up in other religious traditions. For such people salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace which, while having a mysterious relationship to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation. **This grace comes from Christ;** it is the result of his Sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It enables each person to attain salvation through his or her free cooperation.

For this reason the Council, after affirming the centrality of the Paschal Mystery, went on to declare that "this applies not only to Christians but to all people of good will in whose hearts grace is secretly at work. Since Christ died for everyone, and since the ultimate calling of each of us comes from God and is therefore a universal one, we are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in this Paschal Mystery in a manner known to God."¹⁹

"We cannot but speak" (Acts 4:20)

11. What then should be said of the objections already mentioned regarding the mission *ad gentes*? While respecting the beliefs and sensitivities of all, we must first clearly affirm our faith in Christ, the one Savior of mankind, a faith we have received as a gift from on high, not as a result of any merit of our own. We say with Paul, "**I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith**" (Rom 1:16). Christian martyrs of all times - including our own - have given and continue to give their lives in order to bear witness to this faith, in the conviction that every human being needs Jesus Christ, who has conquered sin and death and reconciled mankind to God.

Confirming his words by miracles and by his resurrection from the dead, Christ proclaimed himself to be the Son of God dwelling in intimate union with the Father, and was recognized as such by his disciples. The Church offers mankind the Gospel, that prophetic message which responds to the needs and aspirations of the human heart and always remains "Good News." The Church cannot fail to proclaim that Jesus came to reveal the face of God and to merit salvation for all humanity by his cross and resurrection.

To the question, "*why mission?*" we reply with the Church's faith and experience that true liberation consists in opening oneself to the love of Christ. In him, and only in him, are we set free from all alienation and doubt, from slavery to the power of sin and death. Christ is truly "our peace" (Eph 2:14); "the love of Christ impels us" (2 Cor 5:14), giving meaning and joy to our life. **Mission is an issue of faith, an accurate indicator of our faith in Christ and his love for us.**

The temptation today is to reduce Christianity to merely human wisdom, a pseudo-science of well-being. In our heavily secularized world a "**gradual secularization of salvation**" has taken place, so that people strive for the good of man, but man who is truncated, reduced to his merely horizontal dimension. We know, however, that Jesus came to bring integral salvation, one which embraces the whole person and all mankind, and opens up the wondrous prospect of divine filiation. *Why mission?* Because to us, as to St. Paul, "**this grace was given, to preach to the**

Gentiles: the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8). Newness of life in him is the "Good News" for men and women of every age: all are called to it and destined for it. Indeed, all people are searching for it, albeit at times in a confused way, and have a right to know the value of this gift and to approach it freely. The Church, and every individual Christian within her, may not keep hidden or monopolize this newness and richness which has been received from God's bounty in order to be communicated to all mankind.

This is why the Church's mission derives not only from the Lord's mandate but also from the profound demands of God's life within us. Those who are incorporated in the Catholic Church ought to sense their privilege and for that very reason their greater obligation of *bearing witness to the faith and to the Christian life* as a service to their brothers and sisters and as a fitting response to God. They should be ever mindful that "**they owe their distinguished status not to their own merits but to Christ's special grace; and if they fail to respond to this grace in thought, word and deed, not only will they not be saved, they will be judged more severely.**"²⁰

Session 9, page 46 Para 21 – 30

Ioannes Paulus PP. II

Redemptoris missio

On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate
1990.12.07

CHAPTER III - THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE PRINCIPAL AGENT OF MISSION

Also Quoted on session 15 page 73

21. "At the climax of Jesus' messianic mission, the Holy Spirit becomes present in the Paschal Mystery in all of his divine subjectivity: as the one who is now to continue the salvific work rooted in the sacrifice of the cross. Of course Jesus entrusts this work to human beings: to the apostles, to the Church. Nevertheless, in and through them the Holy Spirit remains the transcendent and principal agent for the accomplishment of this work in the human spirit and in the history of the world."³¹

The Holy Spirit is indeed the principal agent of the whole of the Church's mission. His action is preeminent in the *mission ad gentes*, as can clearly be seen in the early Church: in the conversion of Cornelius (cf. Acts 10), in the decisions made about emerging problems (cf. Acts 15) and in the choice of regions and peoples to be evangelized (cf. Acts 16:6ff). The Spirit worked through the apostles, but at the same time he was also at work in those who heard them: "Through his

action the **Good News takes shape** in human minds and hearts and extends through history. In all of this it is the Holy Spirit who gives life."³²

Sent Forth "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8)

22. All the Evangelists, when they describe the risen Christ's meeting with his apostles, conclude with the **"missionary mandate"**: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,...and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt 28:18-20; cf. Mk 16:15-18; Lk 24:46-49; Jn 20:21-23).

This is *a sending forth in the Spirit*, as is clearly apparent in the Gospel of John: Christ sends his own into the world, just as the Father has sent him, and to this end he gives them the Spirit. Luke, for his part, closely links the witness the apostles are to give to Christ with the working of the Spirit, who will enable them to fulfill the mandate they have received.

23. The different versions of the **"missionary mandate"** contain common elements as well as characteristics proper to each. Two elements, however, are found in all the versions. **First**, there is the **universal dimension of the task entrusted to the apostles**, who are **sent to "all nations"** (Mt 28:19); "into **all the world** and...to the whole creation" (Mk 16:15); to **"all nations"** (Lk 24:47); "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). **Secondly**, there is the assurance given to the apostles by the Lord that **they will not be alone in the task**, but will receive the strength and the means necessary to carry out their mission. The reference here is to the presence and power of the spirit and the help of Jesus himself: "And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them" (Mk 16:20).

As for the different emphases found in each version, **Mark presents mission as proclamation or kerygma**: "**Preach the Gospel**" (Mk 16:15). His aim is to lead his readers to repeat Peter's profession of faith: "**You are the Christ**" (Mk 8:29), and to say with the Roman centurion who stood before the body of Jesus on the cross: "**Truly this man was the Son of God!**" (Mk 15:39) In **Matthew**, the **missionary emphasis is placed on the foundation of the Church and on her teaching** (cf. Mt 28:19-20; 16:18). According to him, the mandate shows that the proclamation of the Gospel must be completed by a specific ecclesial and sacramental catechesis. In **Luke**, **mission is presented as witness** (cf. Lk 24:48; Acts 1:8), **centered especially on the resurrection** (cf. Acts 1:22). The missionary is invited to believe in the transforming power of the Gospel and to proclaim what Luke presents so well, that is, conversion to God's love and mercy, the experience of a complete liberation which goes to the root of all evil, namely sin.

John is the **only Evangelist to speak explicitly of a "mandate,"** a **word equivalent to "mission."** He directly links the mission which Jesus entrusts to his disciples with the mission which he himself has received from the Father: "**As the Father has sent me, even so I send you**" (Jn 20:21). Addressing the Father, Jesus says: "**As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world**" (Jn 17:18). The **entire missionary sense of John's Gospel is expressed in the "priestly prayer"**: "This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (Jn 17:3). The **ultimate purpose of mission** is to **enable people to share in the communion which exists between the Father and the Son**. The **disciples are to live in unity with one another**, remaining in the Father and the Son, so that the world may know and

believe (cf. Jn 17:21-23). This is a very important missionary text. It makes us understand that we are missionaries above all because of *what we are* as a Church whose innermost life is **unity in love**, even before we become missionaries *in word or deed*.

The four Gospels therefore bear witness to a certain pluralism within the **fundamental unity of the same mission**, a pluralism which reflects different experiences and situations within the first Christian communities. It is also the result of the driving force of the Spirit himself; it encourages us to pay heed to the variety or missionary charisms and to the diversity of circumstances and peoples. Nevertheless, **all the Evangelists stress that the mission of the disciples is to cooperate in the mission of Christ**; "Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt 28:20). Mission, then, is based not on human abilities but on the power of the risen Lord.

The Spirit Directs the Church's Mission

24. The mission of the Church, like that of Jesus, is **God's work** or, as Luke often puts it, the **work of the Spirit**. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the apostles have a powerful experience which completely transforms them: the experience of Pentecost. The coming of the Holy Spirit makes them *witnesses* and *prophets* (cf. Acts 1:8; 2:17-18). It fills them with a serene courage which impels them to pass on to others their experience of Jesus and the hope which motivates them. The Spirit gives them the ability to bear witness to Jesus with "boldness."³³ When the first evangelizers go down from Jerusalem, the Spirit becomes even more of a "**guide**," helping them to choose both those to whom they are to go and the places to which their missionary journey is to take them. The working of the Spirit is manifested particularly in the impetus given to the mission which, in accordance with Christ's words, spreads out from Jerusalem to all of Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest ends of the earth.

The Acts of the Apostles records six summaries of the "**missionary discourses**" which were addressed to the Jews during the Church's infancy (cf. Acts 2:22-39 [*Peter's Pentecost Preaching*]; 3:12-26 [*Peter Cures Beggar & addresses the crowd*]; 4:9-12 [*Peter before Sanhedrin*]; 5:29-32 [*Trial Testimony before Sanhedrin*]; 10:34-43 [*Peter with Cornelius*]; 13:16-41 [*Paul in the Synagogue*]). These model speeches, delivered by Peter and by Paul, **proclaim Jesus** and **invite those listening to "be converted,"** that is, to accept Jesus in faith and to let themselves be transformed in him by the Spirit.

Paul and Barnabas are **impelled by the Spirit to go to the Gentiles** (cf. Acts 13:46-48), a development not without certain tensions and problems. **How are these converted Gentiles to live their faith in Jesus?** Are they bound by the traditions of Judaism and the law of circumcision? At the first Council, which gathers the members of the different churches together with the apostles in Jerusalem, a decision is taken which is acknowledged as coming from the Spirit: it is **not necessary for a Gentile to submit to the Jewish Law in order to become a Christian** (cf. Acts 15:5-11, 28). From now on the Church opens her doors and becomes the house which all may enter, and in which all can feel at home, while keeping their own culture and traditions, provided that these are not contrary to the Gospel.

25. The missionaries continued along this path, taking into account people's hopes and expectations, their anguish and sufferings, as well as their culture, in order to **proclaim** to them **salvation in Christ**. The speeches in Lystra and Athens (cf. Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31) are acknowledged as **models for the evangelization of the Gentiles**. In these speeches Paul enters into "**dialogue**" with the **cultural and religious values of different peoples**. To the Lycaonians, who practiced a cosmic religion, he speaks of religious experiences related to the cosmos. With the **Greeks** he **discusses philosophy and quotes their own poets** (cf. Acts 17:18, 26-28). The God whom Paul wishes to reveal is already present in their lives; indeed, this God has created them and mysteriously guides nations and history. But if they are to recognize the true God, they must abandon the false gods which they themselves have made and open themselves to the One whom God has sent to remedy their ignorance and satisfy the longings of their hearts. These are speeches which offer an **example of the Inculturation of the Gospel**.

Under the impulse of the Spirit, the Christian faith is decisively opened to the "nations." **Witness to Christ spreads to the most important centers of the eastern Mediterranean and then to Rome and the far regions of the West**. It is the Spirit who is the source of the drive to press on, not only geographically but also beyond the frontiers of race and religion, for a truly universal mission.

The Holy Spirit Makes the Whole Church Missionary

26. The Spirit leads the company of believers to "**form a community**," to be the Church. After Peter's first proclamation on the day of Pentecost and the conversions that followed, the first community takes shape (cf. Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35).

One of the central purposes of mission is to **bring people together in hearing the Gospel, in fraternal communion, in prayer and in the Eucharist**. To live in "**fraternal communion**" (*koinonia*) means to be "**of one heart and soul**" (Acts 4:32), establishing fellowship from every point of view: human, spiritual and material. Indeed, a true Christian community is also committed to distributing earthly goods, so that no one is in want, and all can receive such goods "as they need" (cf. Acts 2:45; 4:35). The first communities, made up of "glad and generous hearts" (Acts 2:46), were open and missionary: they enjoyed "favor with all the people" (Acts 2:47). Even before activity, **mission means witness and a way of life that shines out to others**.³⁴

27. The Acts of the Apostles indicates that the mission which was directed first to Israel and then to the Gentiles develops on many levels. First and foremost, there is the group of the Twelve which as a single body, led by Peter, proclaims the Good News. Then there is the community of believers, which in its way of life and its activity bears witness to the Lord and converts the Gentiles (cf. Acts 2:46-47). Then there are the special envoys sent out to proclaim the Gospel. Thus the Christian community at Antioch sends its members forth on mission; having fasted, prayed and celebrated the Eucharist, the community recognizes that the Spirit has chosen Paul and Barnabas to be "**sent forth**" (cf. Acts 13:1-4). In its origins, then, mission is seen as a community commitment, a responsibility of the local church, which needs "missionaries" in order to push forward toward new frontiers. Side by side with those who had been sent forth, there were also others, who bore spontaneous witness to the newness which had transformed

their lives, and who subsequently provided a link between the emerging communities and the Apostolic Church.

Reading the Acts of the Apostles helps us to realize that at the beginning of the Church the mission *ad gentes*, while it had missionaries dedicated "for life" by a special vocation, was in fact considered the normal outcome of Christian living, to which every believer was committed through the **witness of personal conduct** and through **explicit proclamation** whenever possible.

The Spirit Is Present and Active in Every Time and Place

28. The **Spirit manifests** himself in a special way in the Church and in her members. Nevertheless, **his presence and activity are universal**, limited neither by space nor time.³⁵ The Second Vatican Council recalls that the Spirit is at work in the heart of every person, through the "**seeds of the Word**," to be found in human initiatives-including religious ones-and in mankind's efforts to attain truth, goodness and God himself.³⁶

The Spirit offers the human race "**the light and strength to respond to its highest calling**"; through the Spirit, "mankind attains in faith to the contemplation and savoring of the mystery of God's design"; indeed, "we are obliged to hold that the **Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in the Paschal Mystery in a manner known to God**."³⁷ The Church "is aware that humanity is being continually stirred by the Spirit of God and can therefore never be completely indifferent to the problems of religion" and that "people will always...want to know **what meaning to give their life, their activity and their death**."³⁸ The Spirit, therefore, is at the very source of man's existential and religious questioning, a questioning which is occasioned not only by contingent situations but by the very structure of his being.³⁹

The Spirit's presence and activity affect not only the individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions. Indeed, the **Spirit** is at the origin of the noble ideals and undertakings which benefit humanity on its journey through history: "The Spirit of God with marvelous foresight directs the course of the ages and renews the face of the earth."⁴⁰ The risen Christ "is now at work in human hearts through the strength of his Spirit, not only instilling a desire for the world to come but also thereby animating, purifying and reinforcing the noble aspirations which drive the human family to make its life one that is more human and to direct the whole earth to this end."⁴¹ Again, it is the Spirit who sows the "**seeds of the Word**" present in various customs and cultures, preparing them for full maturity in Christ.⁴²

29. Thus the Spirit, who "**blows where he wills**" (cf. Jn 3:8), who "**was already at work in the world before Christ was glorified**,"⁴³ and who "**has filled the world**,...holds all things together [and] knows what is said" (Wis 1:7), leads us to broaden our vision in order to ponder his activity in every time and place.⁴⁴ I have repeatedly called this fact to mind, and it has guided me in my meetings with a wide variety of peoples. The **Church's relationship with other religions is dictated by a twofold respect: "Respect for man in his quest for answers to the deepest questions of his life, and respect for the action of the Spirit in man."**⁴⁵ [*address to Reps of Non-Christian religions, Madras, Feb 5, 1986: AAS 78*]. Excluding any mistaken interpretation, the **interreligious meeting held in Assisi** was meant to confirm my conviction that "every authentic prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit, who is mysteriously present in every human heart."⁴⁶

This is the same Spirit who was at work in the Incarnation and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and who is at work in the Church. **He is therefore not an alternative to Christ, nor does he fill a sort of void which is sometimes suggested as existing between Christ and the Logos.** Whatever the Spirit brings about in human hearts and in the history of peoples, in cultures and religions serves as a preparation for the Gospel⁴⁷ and can only be understood in reference to Christ, the Word who took flesh by the power of the Spirit" so that as perfectly human he would save all human beings and sum up all things."⁴⁸

Moreover, the universal activity of the Spirit is not to be separated from his particular activity within the body of Christ, which is the Church. Indeed, it is always the Spirit who is at work, both when he gives life to the Church and impels her to proclaim Christ, and when he implants and develops his gifts in all individuals and peoples, guiding the Church to discover these gifts, to foster them and to receive them through dialogue. Every form of the Spirit's presence is to be welcomed with respect and gratitude, but the discernment of this presence is the responsibility of the Church, to which Christ gave his Spirit in order to guide her into all the truth (cf. Jn 16:13).

Missionary Activity Is Only Beginning

30. Our own time, with humanity on the move and in continual search, demands *a resurgence of the Church's missionary activity*. The horizons and possibilities for mission are growing ever wider, and we Christians are called to an apostolic courage based upon **trust in the Spirit**. *He is the principal agent of mission!*

The history of humanity has known many major turning points which have encouraged missionary outreach, and the Church, guided by the Spirit, has always responded to them with generosity and farsightedness. Results have not been lacking. Not long ago we celebrated the millennium of the evangelization of Rus' and the Slav peoples, and we are now preparing to celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the evangelization of the Americas. Similarly, there have been recent commemorations of the centenaries of the first missions in various countries of Asia, Africa and Oceania. Today the Church must face other challenges and push forward to new frontiers, both in the initial mission *ad gentes* and in the **new evangelization of those peoples who have already heard Christ proclaimed**. Today all Christians, the particular churches and the universal Church, are called to have the same courage that inspired the missionaries of the past, and the **same readiness to listen to the voice of the Spirit**.

Session 10, page 50 Proclamation Para 31 – 36 [Repeated for Ses 11]

Session 10, page 47

The bolded sentence of this paragraph is found on page 47. Paul VI – *Evangelii nuntiandi*

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] - 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.

Paraphrased, Michael goes on to say:

27. Evangelization will also always contain - as the *[at the core of the message is Jesus]* **foundation, center**, and at the same time, *[source]* 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.

Hierarchy of Truths

1. Center or Core – **Jesus**
2. **Kerygma** – the Basic Gospel Message – the fundamentals of the Faith
 - a. God made us for communion with Himself
 - b. Sin broke the communion between God and man
 - c. Jesus came to restore the relationship between God and man
 - d. We need to say “Yes”
3. **Scripture, Sacraments, The Church, Our Lady**
4. Moses in the Basket

Gospel is simple, but not simplistic - critiques

1. We are forgetting some vitally important parts
2. It's too simplistic

Session 10 Supplement on “The Kerygma”

The Kerygma Enigma

[Hector Molina](#)

July 19, 2013

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/the-kerygma-enigma>



Kerygma is a **term that is largely unfamiliar to most Catholics**. *Kerygma* (from the Greek *keryssein*, **to proclaim**, and *keryx*, **herald**) refers to the initial and essential proclamation of the gospel message. The word appears nine times in the New Testament: once in Matthew (12:41), once in Mark (16:20), once in Luke (11:32), and six times in the letters of St. Paul (Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 1:21, 2:4, 15:14; 2 Tim. 4:17; and Titus 1:3). To put it simply, the **kerygma is the very heart of the gospel, the core message of the Christian faith that all believers are called to proclaim.**

Kerygma is distinct from *didache*, another Greek term that refers to teaching, instruction, or doctrine. While **kerygma means the initial gospel proclamation designed to introduce a person to Christ and to appeal for conversion**, *didache* (what we **commonly refer to today as catechesis**) concerns the **fuller and more extensive doctrinal and moral teaching and instruction in the Faith that a person receives once he has accepted the kerygma and has been baptized.**

Bl. John Paul II, in his 1979 apostolic exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, describes how catechesis builds upon the kerygma:

Thus through catechesis the Gospel **kerygma** (the initial ardent proclamation by which a person is one day overwhelmed and brought to the decision to entrust himself to Jesus Christ by faith) is gradually deepened, developed in its implicit consequences, explained in language that includes an appeal to reason, and channeled towards Christian practice in the Church and the world (CT 25).

Thus, **the initial kerygmatic proclamation and catechesis are two necessary and mutually enriching components of evangelization.** However, in my experience I have found that there is general imbalance in the Church (on the diocesan and parochial levels), which unfortunately tends to place a much greater emphasis on catechesis at the expense of initial proclamation.

In his 1990 encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*, Bl. John Paul II underscored how essential kerygma is in the life and mission of the Church:

Proclamation is the permanent priority of mission. The Church cannot elude Christ's explicit mandate, nor deprive men and women of the "**Good News**" about their being loved and saved by God. "Evangelization will always contain—as the **foundation, center**, and at the same time **the summit** of its dynamism—a clear proclamation that, **in Jesus Christ . . . salvation is offered to all people**, as a gift of God's grace and mercy." All forms of missionary activity are directed to this proclamation, which reveals and gives access to the mystery hidden for ages and made known in Christ (cf. Eph 3:3-9; Col 1:25-29), the mystery which lies at the heart of the Church's mission and life, as the hinge on which all evangelization turns.

In the complex reality of mission, initial proclamation has a central and irreplaceable role, since it introduces man "into the mystery of the love of God, who invites him to enter into a personal relationship with himself in Christ" and opens the way to conversion. **Faith is born of preaching**, and every ecclesial community draws its origin and life from the personal response of each believer to that preaching. Just as the whole economy of salvation has its center in Christ, so too all missionary activity is directed to the proclamation of his mystery.

The **subject of proclamation is Christ who was crucified, died, and is risen**: through him is accomplished our full and authentic liberation from evil, sin and death; through him God bestows "new life" that is divine and eternal. This is the "**Good News**" which changes man and his history, and which all peoples have a right to hear (RM 44).

John Paul II saw this primary or **initial proclamation (kerygma)** as an essential component of the new evangelization to which all of the faithful are called:

The **vital core of the new evangelization must be a clear and unequivocal proclamation of the person of Jesus Christ, that is, the preaching of his name, his teaching, his life, his promises and the Kingdom, which he has gained for us by his Paschal Mystery.**

The lay faithful too, precisely as members of the Church, have the vocation and mission of proclaiming the Gospel: they are prepared for this work by

the sacraments of Christian initiation and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit". They have been "in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ." Consequently, "the lay faithful, in virtue of their participation in the prophetic mission of Christ, are fully part of this work of the Church" and so should feel called and encouraged to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (*Ecclesia in America*, 66).

If the kerygma is as vitally important to the New Evangelization as Bl. John Paul II claimed it to be, and if all of the baptized are bound to share the gospel with others, then why are we not devoting more of our energies toward the formation of the lay faithful in this initial proclamation?

After all, we simply cannot assume that all believers know the kerygma. **How many Catholics do you know that would be able to comfortably articulate the essential elements of the gospel and lead someone to faith?**

As evangelizers, we must first know the kerygma if we are going to effectively communicate it to others. Unfortunately, for many Catholics the **kerygma remains an enigma**. They may know certain aspects of it, "**God loves you,**" "**Christ died for your sins,**" but they are **not able to confidently and systematically share this core message of salvation with others**. I remain convinced that this is a challenge that must be addressed. It is not enough for pastors to tell their parishioners that they are called to evangelize. They **need to teach them *how to evangelize***.

When I was director of evangelization for the St. Louis archdiocese, I spent a lot of time conducting parish seminars and workshops through which I would teach the laity the essential elements of the kerygma and how to effectively and confidently share it with others. Do you know what the participants quickly came to realize? This isn't rocket science. You don't need a Ph.D. in theology to do this. You don't need to be a priest to do this. You don't need to be a "preacher" to do this. Anyone can do it. They just need to be taught how.

I remain convinced that all dioceses and parishes should have a strategy and plan for forming the laity for kerygmatic proclamation and evangelization. For this reason I was encouraged to see this issue taken up at the recent

Synod for the New Evangelization. The synod fathers addressed it directly in one of their [58 propositions](#), which were later presented to Pope Benedict.

Proposition 9: NEW EVANGELIZATION AND INITIAL PROCLAMATION

The "**first proclamation**" is where the kerygma, the message of salvation of the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ, is proclaimed with great spiritual power to the point of **bringing about repentance of sin, conversion of hearts** and a **decision of faith**. At the same time there has to be continuity between first proclamation and catechesis, which instructs us in the deposit of the faith. We consider it necessary that there be **a Pastoral Plan of Initial Proclamation**, teaching a living encounter with Jesus Christ. . . . The Synod Fathers propose that guidelines of the initial proclamation of the kerygma be written. This compendium would include:

- **Systematic teaching on the kerygma in Scripture and Tradition** of the Catholic Church;
- Teachings and quotations from the missionary saints and martyrs in our Catholic history that would assist us in our pastoral challenges of today; and
- Qualities and guidelines for the formation of Catholic evangelizers today.

I know that Pope Francis has indicated that he is in the process of writing a [post-synodal apostolic exhortation](#) on evangelization that will interact with the propositions submitted. I believe that such an exhortation would give a greater impetus for bishops and pastors alike to take up this exciting and much-needed proposal, which I believe would contribute greatly to the formation of the laity for the new evangelization.

In my next post, I will be exploring the content of the kerygma—something every Catholic should know.

Alpha & Kerygma

[Hector Molina](#)

August 30, 2013

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/alpha-kerygma>



In one of my earlier blog posts entitled [The Kerygma Enigma](#), I wrote of the essential importance of the initial preaching or proclamation of the basic Gospel message in the process of evangelization. After more than twenty years in professional pastoral ministry, I have become quite convinced that one of the reasons why we Catholics tend to be so weak and ineffectual at evangelization is the fact that we have lost a sense of how vitally important the *kerygma* is.

The dominant pastoral paradigm, operative in the vast majority of parishes today, dictates that we evangelize and bring people to Christ primarily through ***didache*** (teaching and instruction in the faith, or catechesis).

How many Catholics do you know, after having received twelve years of Catholic education and years of religious instruction, have inevitably drifted away from the Church? Why is this? I would submit to you that the problem lies largely in the fact that we are guilty of putting the cart before the horse. While catechesis (*didache*) is an important component in the process of evangelization, it does not replace the proclamation of the *kerygma*, but **should complement it.**

Bl. John Paul II, in his 1979 apostolic exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, describes how catechesis (*didache*) builds upon the *kerygma*:

Thus through catechesis the Gospel *kerygma* (the initial ardent proclamation by which a person is one day overwhelmed and brought to the decision to entrust himself to Jesus Christ by faith) is gradually deepened, developed in its implicit consequences, explained in language that includes an appeal to reason, and channeled towards Christian practice in the Church and the world (CT 25).

The **reality is that many Catholics have been catechized without ever truly being evangelized.** They have been **presented with the teachings of the Catholic faith, without ever having been introduced to the person of Christ.**

This very point was reiterated in a few YouTube videos that I recently came across from Father John Riccardo, Pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Plymouth, MI. In them, **Father Riccardo** and his priest associates discuss a **bold new evangelization initiative** that their entire parish will soon be undertaking. This fall, in an effort to present the *kerygma* to all of their parishioners, they have suspended their very solid adult faith formation classes and will instead be offering one thing: the [Alpha Course](#), 7 days a week for 10 weeks at 10 different times.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with *Alpha*, it is a 10-week course, which introduces participants to...you guessed it...the *kerygma*. It was first developed by an Anglican Parish in London over thirty years ago and has been experienced by millions of people worldwide, across many denominations. It has been [adapted for Catholics](#) and has been hailed by

many Catholic Cardinals, Bishops, theologians, scholars, pastors, and leaders as an effective tool for awakening faith in people who are on the fringes of parish life, as well as faithful Catholics and those outside the faith.

The Alpha Course is not without its detractors. There are some who assert that the course is theologically flawed and deficient, given its Protestant origins. Personally, I think that the many of the adaptations that have been made to it over the years have gone a long way towards resolving those issues. **What many of these critics fail to understand is that the Alpha Course is meant to be a basic introduction to the heart of the Gospel and not a systematic and exhaustive catechesis or course in theology.** That comes later.

The Preacher to the Papal Household, Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, a longtime supporter and proponent of the Alpha Course for Catholics sums it up best:

“It is the Alpha course, not the Alpha and Omega course. Alpha focuses on the kerygma, which is the starting point of faith. After people come to a living faith in Jesus then they need to be formed in the faith which is up to other parish programs to do.”

Is the Alpha Course a perfect program? As Father Riccardo notes in the video, no, it isn't. Then again, what program is? There are many parishes, like Our Lady of Good Counsel, that recognize the tremendous value and potential in the Alpha Course and have decided to build upon it.

I applaud Father Riccardo and Pastors like him who recognize that it is indeed **impossible to plant seeds on bricks and expect a harvest.** Our people need to be introduced to the kerygma first, and Alpha is one of the exciting new tools and resources that enables parishes do just that.

Are You an A-Lister?

[Hector Molina](#)

September 27, 2013

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/are-you-an-a-lister>

At a recent Parish Evangelization Seminar I conducted, I shared with the participants on the vital importance of prayer in evangelization, and more specifically, the power of **intercessory prayer**.

When we pray for those in need of evangelizing, we are asking for nothing less than divine intervention, because **conversion** (as the Catechism teaches) **is a work of grace**.

The human heart is heavy and hardened. God must give man a new heart. **Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God who makes our hearts return to him:** "Restore us to thyself, O LORD, that we may be restored!" God gives us the strength to begin anew. (CCC 1432).

When we pray for those who have yet to receive the Gospel and who have yet to encounter Christ, we are asking the Holy Spirit to touch and soften hardened hearts and minds, in order that they would be properly disposed for the sowing of the gospel.

Throughout the NT, the Apostle Paul repeatedly underscores the importance of intercessory prayer in the work of evangelization.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:1-4).

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; and pray for us also, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison, that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak (Col. 4:2-4).

Become an A-Lister

In speaking to the seminar participants on the importance of intercessory prayer, I encouraged them to consider becoming **A-Listers** (and not in the Hollywood sense).

The **A** in **A-List** refers to the Apostle **Andrew**. The Gospel of John introduces Andrew as a disciple of John the Baptist, whose testimony first led him, and another unnamed disciple of John the Baptist to follow Jesus.

The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples; and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak, and followed him, was **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother (John 1:35-40).

As a result of his encounter with Christ, Andrew personally introduces his brother Simon to him.

He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). **He brought him to Jesus**. Jesus looked at him, and said, "So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter) (John 1:41-42).

St. Andrew illustrates for us what the Church refers to as *primary evangelization*, which involves the joyful proclamation of the *kerygma* to those who have never heard it and thus introducing them to Christ. In this case, Andrew, after encountering Jesus, is filled with a holy zeal that compels him to share the Good News with his brother Simon and introduce him to the Lord.

It goes without saying that each of us is called to imitate his example. Like Andrew, we who have found the Messiah are called to announce the Good News to others and bring them to Christ.

And how should we go about it?

As the Good Lord himself and His saints throughout the centuries have instructed us, we should always begin with prayer. That's where the **A-List** comes in.

The idea behind the **A-List** (Andrew List) is to put down on paper a list of the people we know who currently do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ - be they family members, friends, neighbors, or co-workers - and to commit ourselves to praying for them daily.

I began the practice of keeping an **A-List** after my own conversion experience in my mid-teens. I attended a youth retreat that was closely patterned after the three-day *Cursillo*. During the course of that weekend, the basic kerygma is proclaimed to the retreatants, who are then invited to make an act of faith in response to this saving message and receive Christ.

Little do the retreatants know, there are hundreds of people behind the scenes who are praying and interceding for them throughout the course of the weekend. One of the most powerful moments of the retreat is when the participants are presented with stacks of letters and cards prepared by family members, friends, (and even total strangers!) expressing their love and spiritual solidarity.

I remember how deeply moved I was to learn that so many people were praying for me - that I would come to know the love of Christ. I know that the spiritual awakening that I experienced that weekend was aided in large part by those intercessory prayers.

As a result of that experience, I began the practice of keeping my own **A-list** of names that I include in my daily prayers, devotions, and Mass intentions. I can tell you that by God's grace, this practice has not only benefited the lives of the people I have prayed for over the years, but it has also had a profound impact on me.

I have found that as I pray daily for the souls on my **A-List**, I am filled with an ever-deepening love for them. I am filled with a thirst for their souls, that

they may come to know Christ. Praying for the souls on my A-List has cultivated in me a greater sense of humility. I become more aware of my own need for continual repentance and conversion. As I pray, I become more profoundly aware of the fact that I am but an instrument and vessel in the hands of the Lord and that it is He who ultimately converts hearts and minds. As Pope Paul VI noted in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*:

It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: it is He who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is He who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood (EN,75).

I would recommend that you take some time to prayerfully consider the people in your life who do not have a relationship with Christ, or who have grown distant from The Lord and His Church. Write their names down on a piece of paper.

To make things more manageable, I would suggest you take that list and narrow it down to 10 or so individuals who you believe are in the greatest need of prayer. Then pray.

What should you pray for?

1. Pray for openness and receptivity

Pray that the souls you seek to evangelize would be properly disposed to receive the message. Pray that God the Father would tenderize their hearts and minds in order that they would be open and receptive to the Good News. Pray that God would bind whatever forces are at work, which impede them from receiving the gift of faith.

2. Pray for opportunities

Like St. Paul, pray to the Holy Spirit for "**an open door**" to witness the Gospel to them, and if not you, then someone who would be better suited to the task.

3. Pray for the spiritual gifts

Pray for a release of the spiritual gifts that will enable you to effectively communicate the Good News. Pray for wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. Pray and strive for personal growth in holiness.

4. Pray for a greater docility to the Holy Spirit

Pray for sensitivity and docility to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, that you would follow God's lead instead of your own. Pray always that His perfect will be done in all things.

5. Pray for Perseverance

Finally, it is important for us to commit ourselves to persevere in prayer, regardless of what happens. The fact of the matter is that oftentimes we will not see immediate results.

Jesus exhorts his followers to "*pray always without losing heart*" (Lk 1:18). It is important to know that we may not see the immediate impact of our prayers, but we should not give up or lose hope. Like St. Monica, the pious mother of the wayward Augustine, it may take many years and many tears before we see the fruit of our spiritual labor. Yet God is always faithful and there is nothing too hard for Him.

If you haven't already, I would encourage you to consider creating your own **A-List** today. Make it a point of beginning your evangelization effort with prayer and behold how God will infuse them with great power for the salvation of souls.

Saint Andrew, pray for us.

Did You Know? Secular Root of Kerygma

The Greek god Hermes, who served as herald and messenger to the other gods, carried a winged staff entwined with two snakes. The staff of

Aesculapius, the god of healing, had one snake and no wings. The word "caduceus," from Latin, is a modification of Greek *karykeion*, from *karyx*, meaning "herald." Strictly speaking, "caduceus" should refer only to the staff of the herald-god Hermes (Mercury to the Romans), but in practice the word is often applied to the one-snake staff as well. You might logically expect the staff of Aesculapius to be the symbol of the medical profession-and indeed, that is the symbol used by the American Medical Association. But you will also quite frequently see the true caduceus used as a medical symbol.

Session 11, page 52 [Same for Both Ses 10 & 11 Para 31-36]

Ioannes Paulus PP. II

Redemptoris missio

On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate

1990.12.07

CHAPTER IV - THE VAST HORIZONS OF THE MISSION *AD GENTES*

31. The Lord Jesus sent his apostles to every person, people and place on earth. In the apostles, the **Church received a universal mission**-one which knows no boundaries-which involves the communication of salvation in its integrity according to that fullness of life which Christ came to bring (cf. Jn 10:10). The Church was "**sent by Christ to reveal and communicate the love of God to all people and nations.**"⁴⁹

This mission is one and undivided, having one origin and one final purpose; but within it, there are different tasks and kinds of activity. **First**, there is the missionary activity which we call *mission ad gentes*, in reference to the opening words of the Council's decree on this subject. This is one of the Church's fundamental activities: it is essential and never-ending. The Church, in fact, "cannot withdraw from her *permanent mission of bringing the Gospel* to the multitudes the millions and millions of men and women-who as yet do not know Christ the Redeemer of humanity. In a specific way this is the missionary work which Jesus entrusted and still entrusts each day to his Church."⁵⁰

A Complex and Ever Changing Religious Picture

32. Today we face a religious situation which is extremely varied and changing. Peoples are on the move; social and religious realities which were once clear and well defined are today

increasingly complex. We need only think of certain phenomena such as urbanization, mass migration, the flood of refugees, the de-Christianization of countries with ancient Christian traditions, the increasing influence of the Gospel and its values in overwhelmingly non-Christian countries, and the proliferation of messianic cults and religious sects. Religious and social upheaval makes it difficult to apply in practice certain ecclesial distinctions and categories to which we have become accustomed. **Even before the Council it was said that some Christian cities and countries had become "mission territories"**; the situation has certainly not improved in the years since then.

On the other hand, missionary work has been very fruitful throughout the world, so that there are now well-established churches, sometimes so sound and mature that they are able to provide for the needs of their own communities and even send personnel to evangelize in other churches and territories. This is in contrast to some traditionally Christian areas which are in need of re-evangelization. As a result, some are questioning whether it is still appropriate to speak of *specific missionary activity* or specifically "missionary" areas, or whether we should speak instead of a *single missionary situation*, with one single mission, the same everywhere. The difficulty of relating this complex and changing reality to the mandate of evangelization is apparent in the **"language of mission."** For example, there is a certain hesitation to use the terms "mission" and "missionaries," which are considered obsolete and as having negative historical connotations. People prefer to use instead the noun "mission" in the singular and the adjective "missionary" to describe all the Church's activities.

This uneasiness denotes a real change, one which has certain positive aspects. The so-called return or "repatriation" of the *missions* into the Church's mission, the insertion of *missiology* into *ecclesiology*, and the integration of both areas into the Trinitarian plan of salvation, have given a fresh impetus to missionary activity itself, which is not considered a marginal task for the Church but is situated at the center of her life, as a fundamental commitment of the whole People of God. Nevertheless, care must be taken to avoid the risk of putting very different situations on the same level and of reducing, or even eliminating, the Church's mission and missionaries *ad gentes*. To say that the whole Church is missionary does not preclude the existence of a specific mission *ad gentes*, just as saying that all Catholics must be missionaries not only does not exclude, but actually requires that there be persons who have a specific vocation to be "life-long missionaries *ad gentes*."

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.⁵²

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**."

34. Missionary activity proper, namely the mission *ad gentes*, is directed to "**peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ**," "**who are far from Christ**," in whom the Church "**has not yet taken root**"⁵³ and **whose culture has not yet been influenced by the Gospel**.⁵⁴ It is distinct from other ecclesial activities inasmuch as it is addressed to groups and settings which are non-Christian because the preaching of the Gospel and the presence of the Church are either absent or insufficient. It can thus be characterized as the work of proclaiming Christ and his Gospel, building up the local Church and promoting the values of the kingdom. The **specific nature of his mission *ad gentes* consists in its being addressed to "non-Christians"**. It is therefore necessary to ensure that this specifically "missionary work that Jesus entrusted and still entrusts each day to his Church"⁵⁵ does not become an indistinguishable part of the overall mission of the whole People of God and as a result become neglected or forgotten.

On the other hand, the **boundaries between pastoral care of the faithful, new evangelization and specific missionary activity are not clearly definable**, and it is unthinkable to create barriers between them or to put them into watertight compartments. Nevertheless, there must be no lessening of the impetus to preach the Gospel and to establish new churches among peoples or communities where they do not yet exist, for this is the first task of the Church, which has been sent forth to all peoples and to the very ends of the earth. Without the mission *ad gentes*, the Church's very missionary dimension would be deprived of its essential meaning and of the very activity that exemplifies it.

Also to be noted is the real and growing interdependence which exists between these various saving activities of the Church. Each of them influences, stimulates and assists the others. The missionary thrust fosters exchanges between the churches and directs them toward the larger world, with positive influences in every direction. The **churches in traditionally Christian countries**, for example, **involved as they are in the challenging task of new evangelization**, are **coming to understand more clearly that they cannot be missionaries to non-Christians in other countries and continents unless they are seriously concerned about the non-Christians at home**. Hence missionary activity *ad intra* [*the inside*] is a credible sign and a stimulus for missionary activity *ad extra* [*the outside*] and vice versa.

To All Peoples, In Spite of Difficulties

35. The mission *ad gentes* faces an enormous task, which is in no way disappearing. Indeed, both from the numerical standpoint of demographic increase and from the socio-cultural standpoint of the appearance of new relationships, contacts and changing situations the mission seems destined to have ever wider horizons. The **task of proclaiming Jesus Christ to all peoples appears to be immense and out of all proportion to the Church's human resources.**

The *difficulties* seem insurmountable and could easily lead to discouragement, if it were a question of a merely human enterprise. **In certain countries missionaries are refused entry.** In others, **not only is evangelization forbidden but conversion as well, and even Christian worship.** Elsewhere the obstacles are of a cultural nature: passing on the Gospel message seems irrelevant or incomprehensible, and conversion is seen as a rejection of one's own people and culture.

36. Nor are *difficulties* lacking *within* the People of God; indeed these difficulties are the most painful of all. As the first of these difficulties Pope Paul VI pointed to "the **lack of fervor** [which] **is all the more serious because it comes from within. It is manifested in fatigue, disenchantment, compromise, lack of interest and above all lack of joy and hope.**"⁵⁶ Other great obstacles to the Church's missionary work include past and present divisions among Christians,^[57 - *ad gentes para 6*] **dechristianization** within Christian countries, the **decrease of vocations to the apostolate**, and the **counter witness of believers and Christian communities** failing to follow the model of Christ in their lives. But **one of the most serious reasons** for the lack of interest in the missionary task is a **widespread indifferentism**, which, sad to say, is found also among Christians. It is based on incorrect theological perspectives and is characterized by a religious relativism which **leads to the belief that "one religion is as good as another."** We can add, using the words of Pope Paul VI, that there are also certain "excuses which would impede evangelization. The most insidious of these excuses are certainly the ones which people claim to find support for in such and such a teaching of the Council."⁵⁸

In this regard, I earnestly ask theologians and professional Christian journalists to intensify the service they render to the Church's mission in order to discover the deep meaning of their work, along the sure path of "**thinking with the Church**" (*sentire cum Ecclesia*).

Internal and external difficulties must not make us pessimistic or inactive. What counts, here as in every area of Christian life, is the **confidence that comes from faith**, from the **certainty that it is not we who are the principal agents of the Church's mission, but Jesus Christ and his Spirit.** **We are only co-workers**, and **when we have done all that we can, we must say: "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty"** (Lk 17:10).

Sharing the Gospel Is Better Than Flossing

From Care.Net

Posted by [Ardee Coolidge](#) on Feb 22, 2018 5:00:00 AM

Many of us still wrestle with the feeling that we should share the Gospel, but with little knowledge of how we should go about doing it. It's time to change that.

For much of my life, sharing the Gospel was like flossing. I knew I should do it, but it was such a chore! Growing up as a pastor's kid, you would think that I would have been an expert at sharing the Gospel. After all, my earliest memories were of being in church, listening to sermons, and memorizing Bible verses. Moreover, I was an extrovert. Talking was my passion! So, talking about God's love for a sinful world should have been the easiest thing for me to do.

Except it wasn't.

You see, for many years, I vacillated between two extremes. I would either ignore any and all opportunities to talk about God with someone, or I would treat every chance encounter as a life-or-death "**come-to-Jesus altar call moment**." I would often feel incredible guilt at my **lack of "evangelical enthusiasm"** and fear that the lost person I had neglected would soon burn in hell due to my silence.

That was a lot of guilt for a twelve-year-old. I still remember one road trip where I was convinced that every single gas station attendant needed to hear the Gospel. Needless to say, little fruit came of these hurried, guilt-ridden conversations with Chevron cashiers I had known for a total of 15 seconds.

As I reflect on **my turbulent relationship with evangelism**, I realize that I am probably not alone. Other Christians I know dealt with similar feelings growing up in the church. Many of us *still* wrestle with the feeling that we *should* share the Gospel, but with little knowledge of *how* we should go about doing it.

Maybe you feel the same way.

It was only recently that I learned that **sharing the Gospel is not a chore**, it is **not meant to be guilt-ridden**, and, when done properly, it is infinitely more rewarding than flossing. How can that be, you wonder? Well, **first I learned what my role in evangelism was**.

For years, I thought my role was saving people. That's right, I was a pastor's kid with a god-complex. Scripture is clear—**Jesus Christ saves us from sin**. It is His grace

that calls us to repentance and it is faith in His completed work on the cross that causes someone to be “**born again**.” Notice what is lacking in that equation...me. I don’t do any of that. As my theology professor put it, “**I am a poor substitute for the Holy Spirit.**” *[DT’s opinion – but, it is the Holy Spirit that gives us the words to speak, we are the voice, and the Words of Wisdom come from God.]*

So, if I am not responsible for **conversion**, what am I responsible for? *Contact*. As the Apostle Paul put it, “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And **how can they hear without someone preaching to them?**” (Rom. 10:14 NIV). This distinction may seem small, but it is incredibly important. When I felt like I had to *save people*, my gospel presentations bordered on manipulation. I wanted to make sure they made the *right choice* so badly that I almost made it for them. However, when I understood that **conversion** was the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit, I was able to let go of my tendency to try to control the outcome.

The second thing I learned was that “drive-by” gospel presentations often are not effective because the person feels like your special project, rather than a person with whom God desires relationship. The Chevron attendants did not know me from Adam and had little interest in what I would say about God in between “5 gallons on number 3,” and “Have a blessed day.” I learned that the **most effective Gospel presentations are often those made in the context of relationship**. This means that **I actually need to love someone enough to spend time learning who they are, before telling them who God is.**

That was **Jesus’ approach to evangelism. He walked throughout the countryside healing the sick and preaching the good news to them.** It was not a life of works alone or words alone. He was the Word who put on flesh.

At Care Net, our network of 1,100 affiliated pregnancy centers walk this road daily. They provide compassion, hope, and help to those facing difficult pregnancy decisions. They embody the love of Christ. But, **they don’t leave the Gospel to just their actions, they put it into words as well.** Our 30,000 staff and volunteers are trained to sense the Holy Spirit’s direction and seek opportunities to transition conversations towards the abundant life found in Christ. After all, if all we do in this

world is feed a man’s temporal hunger without addressing his spiritual starvation, we have missed the way of Christ.

I’ll be honest; I still wrestle with the feelings of guilt for missed opportunities. I am far from the picture of a perfect evangelist. But, as I have increasingly embraced the way of Christ, loving and leading others to God has felt less and less like an obligation.

So, does my story ring true with your experience? Have you hungered for greater “**evangelistic enthusiasm**?” If so, I want you to check out a new resource designed to help you share the Gospel with those around you— even those who may be facing difficult pregnancy decisions.

This eBook is the result of distilling 40 years of Gospel experience at our 1,100+ affiliated pregnancy centers into one easy-to-read resource, ready to empower you to bring the eternal hope found in Jesus Christ to a woman or man considering abortion. The practical tips inside will help you feel ready to serve a friend facing a difficult pregnancy decision and introduce them to the abundant life found in Christ. Even if you don’t know anyone considering abortion today, this training will ensure that you are ready to help someone whose pregnancy becomes a crisis pregnancy down the road.

I know that it has helped me.

You can get your free copy here:

[Get your free copy of *Sharing the Gospel With Women and Men Considering Abortion*](#)

So, what will it be? A life of sharing the Gospel out of obligation, or a life filled with the joy of knowing we have the privilege of introducing people to the God who made them and loves them with an incomprehensible love?

THE SCIENCE OF STORYTELLING

By Deacon William L. Hickey

Assistant to the Associate to the Vicar for Clergy for Permanent Deacons

The Ariel Group works with business professionals and corporate trainers to improve their public speaking skills. I had the pleasure of working with them last year. Alyssa Galeros Keefe wrote in an Ariel Group blog about the 'science of storytelling'. While her post was directed toward a secular audience I saw an immediate connection to challenges we face in our homilies.

Here are a few highlights:

- Storytelling connects listeners to the storyteller emotionally
- Through a process psychologists call “**narrative transport**”, good stories engage listeners emotionally.

Engaged emotions create empathy with the speaker

- Stories “**light up**” more of the brain than factual reporting
- When the brain is presented with factual information, only two of its regions activate... studies show storytelling causes many additional areas to light up. The brain responds to the story events as if they were actually happening to the listener.
- Stories command human attention

The human brain has a strong tendency to lose focus. It is estimated to engage in up to 2,000 daydreams a day... In the presence of an interesting story, though, this mental meandering goes to zero.

The Gospel is the greatest story ever... how might we improve our homilies using storytelling techniques to better engage, motivate and focus the faithful?

Session 11 - Testimonies:

Chris Keyes [*Start @ 16:40*] – discovery of a personal relationship with God/Jesus – needed to Pray – discovered how close God is – “God, if you are real, show me” - asked to make a commitment to God. Learned many keys – he wants us to be the person we want to be, that person you really want to be.

Emma Fradd [*start @ 19:00, E @ 22:15*] – 6 years ago – was an atheist [in Australia] went to Catholic school, got into bad relationships and doing drugs; Brother got her to pray, if God is Real, I want to be a part of Him - started Praying to Mary; trip to Canada, brother worked for Net Ministry of Canada – Key Ministry for Youth – received Gift of Faith after praying before Blessed Sacrament; continues to be transformed; encourage to pray to God, one on one; The real God who speaks, the real you who listens.

Fr. Simon Lobo, CC – [*start @ 22:20, E @ 22:15*] came from family of faith, deep down yearning to be accepted, wanted friends; at 18, negative comment from former girlfriend on retreat - felt bitterness and emptiness, realized that he treated God in the same way he felt, prayed to Jesus: **is it possible for you to love me the way that I am** – refreshed newness – God loves you

unconditionally; went off to University – gravitating toward other Christians, started every day with prayer, 1 Jn 4:10 – and this is Love that He has loved us; listen to hear his response

"10 Principles for Debate"

from Catholic Voices-www.civilizeit.us

1. Don't get mad, reframe. Look for the positive intention -- challenge a prejudice or preconception. There's often a Christian value at the heart of a criticism. Speak to it.
2. Shed light, not heat. We're here to open doors. We're the Peace Corps, not the Marine Corps.
3. Think in threes. Don't be distracted. Have three points and know how they relate to one another. Go back to them again and again.
4. People won't remember what you said as much as how you made them feel. Aim for civility, empathy and clarity. We aim to be the "joyful messengers of challenging proposals" that Pope Francis calls us to be.
5. Show, don't tell. Stories are compelling. Run with what you know. Stay in your lane. "Think of yourself not as the spokesman of a remote corporation, but as a delighted disciple with stories and experiences to share."
6. Remember to say "Yes." Offer the fullest freedom the Church proposes.
7. Compassion counts. Be ready to absorb anger and hurt.
8. Numbers aren't everything. A fact is meaningless without content and perspective.
9. It is about witnessing, not winning. You're not there to win a debate, but to witness to the love at the heart of our faith.
10. It is not about you. It is about Jesus. It is His Church you represent.

(These are adapted from Kathryn Jean Lopez's and Austen Ivereigh's "How to Defend the Faith without Raising Your Voice," published by Our Sunday Visitor)

Session 12, Conversion, Discipleship & Mission

Catechesis and the Initial Proclamation of the Gospel – Catechesi Tradendae, para 18 & 19 [page 58]

18. Accordingly, while not being formally identified with them, catechesis is built on a certain number of elements of the Church's pastoral mission that have a catechetical aspect, that prepare for catechesis, or that spring from it. These elements are: **the initial proclamation of the Gospel or missionary preaching through the kerygma to arouse faith, apologetics or examination of the reasons for belief, experience of Christian living, celebration of the sacraments, integration into the ecclesial community, and apostolic and missionary witness.**

Let us first of all recall that **there is no separation or opposition between catechesis and evangelization.** Nor can the two be simply identified with each other. Instead, they have close links whereby they **integrate and complement each other.**

19. The specific character of catechesis, as distinct from the initial conversion – bringing proclamation of the Gospel, has the twofold objective of **maturing the initial faith** and of **educating the true disciple of Christ** by means of a **deeper and more systematic knowledge of the person and the message of our Lord Jesus Christ.**(49)

But in catechetical practice, this model order must allow for the fact that the initial evangelization has often not taken place. A certain number of children baptized in infancy come for catechesis in the parish without receiving any other initiation into the faith and still without any explicit personal attachment to Jesus Christ; **they only have the capacity to believe placed within them by Baptism and the presence of the Holy**

Spirit; and opposition is quickly created by the prejudices of their non-Christian family background or of the positivist spirit of their education. In addition, there are other children who have not been baptized and whose parents agree only at a later date to religious education: for practical reasons, the catechumenal stage of these children will often be carried out largely in the course of the ordinary catechesis. Again, many pre-adolescents and adolescents who have been baptized and been given a systematic catechesis and the sacraments still remain hesitant for a long time about committing their whole lives to Jesus Christ - if, moreover, they do not attempt to avoid religious education in the name of their freedom. Finally, even adults are not safe from temptations to doubt or to abandon their faith, especially as a result of their unbelieving surroundings. This means that "**catechesis**" must often concern itself not only with nourishing and teaching the faith, but also with arousing it unceasingly with the help of grace, with opening the heart, with converting, and with preparing total adherence to Jesus Christ on the part of those who are still on the threshold of faith. This concern will in part decide the tone, the language and the method of catechesis.

Ioannes Paulus PP. II

Redemptoris Missio - page 62 – Para 87 - 91

On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate
1990.12.07

CHAPTER VIII - MISSIONARY SPIRITUALITY

87. Missionary activity demands a specific spirituality, which applies in particular to all those whom God has called to be missionaries.

Being Led by the Spirit

This spirituality is expressed first of all by a life of complete docility to the Spirit. It commits us **to being molded from within by the Spirit**, so that we may become ever more like Christ. It is not possible to bear witness to Christ without reflecting his image, which is made alive in us by grace and the power of the Spirit. This docility then commits us to receive the gifts of fortitude and discernment, which are essential elements of missionary spirituality.

An example of this is found with the apostles during the Master's public life. Despite their love for him and their generous response to his call, they proved to be incapable of understanding his words and reluctant to follow him along the path of suffering and humiliation. The Spirit transformed them into courageous witnesses to Christ and enlightened heralds of his word. It was the Spirit himself who guided them along the difficult and new paths of mission.

Today, as in the past, that mission is difficult and complex, and demands the courage and light of the Spirit. We often experience the dramatic situation of the first Christian community which witnessed unbelieving and hostile forces "**gathered together against the Lord and his Anointed**" (Acts 4:26). Now, as then, we must pray that God will grant us boldness in preaching the Gospel; we must ponder the mysterious ways of the Spirit and allow ourselves to be led by him into all the truth (cf. Jn 16:13).

Living the Mystery of Christ, "the One who was sent"

88. An essential characteristic of missionary spirituality is intimate communion with Christ. We cannot understand or carry out the mission unless we refer it to Christ as the one who was sent to evangelize. St. Paul describes Christ's attitude: "**Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross**" (Phil 2:5-8).

The **mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption** is thus described as a **total self-emptying** which leads Christ to experience fully the human condition and to accept totally the Father's plan. This is an emptying of self which is permeated by love and expresses love. **The mission follows this same path and leads to the foot of the cross.**

The missionary is required to "**renounce himself and everything that up to this point he considered as his own, and to make himself everything to everyone.**"¹⁷² This he does by a poverty which sets him free for the Gospel, overcoming attachment to the people and things about him, so that he may become a brother to those to whom he is sent and thus bring them Christ the Savior. This is the goal of missionary spirituality: "**To the weak I became weak...; I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the Gospel...**" (1 Cor 9:22-23).

It is precisely because he is "sent" that the missionary experiences the consoling presence of Christ, who is with him at every moment of life - "**Do not be afraid...for I am with you**" (Acts 18:9-10) - and who awaits him in the heart of every person.

Loving the Church and Humanity As Jesus Did

89. Missionary spirituality is also marked by apostolic charity, the charity of Christ who came

"to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" (Jn 11:52), of the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep, who searches them out and offers his life for them (cf. Jn 10). Those who have the missionary spirit feel Christ's burning love for souls, and love the Church as Christ did.

The missionary is urged on by **"zeal for souls,"** a zeal inspired by Christ's own charity, which takes the form of concern, tenderness, compassion, openness, availability and interest in people's problems. Jesus' love is very deep: he who **"knew what was in man"** (Jn 2:25) loved everyone by offering them redemption and suffered when it was rejected.

The **missionary** is a **person of charity**. In order to proclaim to all his brothers and sisters that they are loved by God and are capable of loving, **he must show love toward all**, giving his life for his neighbor. The missionary is the **"universal brother,"** bearing in himself the Church's spirit, her openness to and interest in all peoples and individuals, especially the least and poorest of his brethren. As such, he overcomes barriers and divisions of race, cast or ideology. He is a sign of God's love in the world - a love without exclusion or partiality.

Finally, like Christ he must love the Church: **"Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her"** (Eph 5:25). This love, even to the point of giving one's life, is a focal point for him. Only profound love for the Church can sustain the missionary's zeal. His daily pressure, as St. Paul says, is **"anxiety for all the churches"** (2 Cor 11:28). For every missionary **"fidelity to Christ cannot be separated from fidelity to the Church."**¹⁷³

The True Missionary Is the Saint

90. The call to mission derives, of its nature, from the **call to holiness**. A missionary is really such only if he **commits himself to the way of holiness**: "Holiness must be called a fundamental presupposition and an irreplaceable condition for everyone in fulfilling the mission of salvation in the Church."¹⁷⁴

The universal call to holiness is closely linked to the *universal call to mission*. **Every member of the faithful is called to holiness and to mission**. This was the earnest desire of the Council, which hoped to be able **"to enlighten all people with the brightness of Christ**, which gleams over the face of the Church, **by preaching the Gospel to every creature."** ¹⁷⁵ The Church's missionary spirituality is a journey toward holiness.

The renewed impulse to the mission *ad gentes* demands holy missionaries. It is not enough to update pastoral techniques, organize and coordinate ecclesial resources, or delve more deeply into the biblical and theological foundations of faith. What is needed is the encouragement of a new **"ardor for holiness"** among missionaries and throughout the Christian community, especially among those who work most closely with missionaries.¹⁷⁶

Dear brothers and sisters: **let us remember the missionary enthusiasm of the first Christian communities**. Despite the limited means of travel and communication in those times, the proclamation of the Gospel quickly reached the ends of the earth. And this was the religion of a man who had died on a cross, **"a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles"**! (1 Cor 1:23)

Underlying this missionary dynamism was the holiness of the first Christians and the first communities.

91. I therefore address myself to the recently baptized members of the young communities and young churches. Today, you are the hope of this two-thousand-year-old Church of ours: being young in faith, you must be like the first Christians **and radiate enthusiasm and courage**, in generous devotion to God and neighbor. In a word, you must set yourselves on the path of holiness. Only thus can you be a sign of God in the world and re-live in your own countries the missionary epic of the early Church. You will also be a leaven of missionary spirit for the older churches.

For their part, missionaries should reflect on the duty of holiness required of them by the gift of their vocation, renew themselves in spirit day by day, and strive to update their doctrinal and pastoral formation. The missionary must be a **"contemplative in action."** He finds answers to problems in the light of God's word and in personal and community prayer. My contact with representatives of the non-Christian spiritual traditions, particularly those of Asia, has confirmed me in the view that the future of mission depends to a great extent on contemplation. **Unless the missionary is a contemplative he cannot proclaim Christ in a credible way.** He is a witness to the experience of God, and must be able to say with the apostles: "that which we have looked upon...concerning the word of life,...we proclaim also to you" (1 Jn 1:1-3).

The missionary is **a person of the Beatitudes**. Before sending out the Twelve to evangelize, Jesus, in his "missionary discourse" (cf. Mt 10), **teaches them the paths of mission: poverty, meekness, acceptance of suffering and persecution, the desire for justice and peace, charity** – in other words, the Beatitudes, lived out in the apostolic life (cf. Mt 5:1-12). By living the Beatitudes, the missionary experiences and **shows concretely that the kingdom of God has already come, and that he has accepted it.** The characteristic of every authentic missionary life is the **inner joy that comes from faith.** In a world tormented and oppressed by so many problems, a world tempted to pessimism, **the one who proclaims the "Good News" must be a person who has found true hope in Christ.**

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)

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?

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

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

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

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