

St. Theresa Catholic Church

Kerygma: The Basic Christian Message

From the outset Christians were people who believed certain things.

These beliefs which they expressed in worship and witness, especially about Jesus the Christ, were fundamental to the existence of the Church. Initially the Church focused its energy entirely on spreading the word and establishing communities. The Apostolic era of the Church was the age in which the Apostles were the primary agents of dissemination and growth, the emphasis being on the basic kerygma:

- The promises of God made in the Old Testament have now been fulfilled with the coming of Jesus.
- Jesus was anointed by God at his Baptism as Messiah.
- Jesus exercised his ministry in Galilee.
- He conducted a ministry of healing and demonstrating the power of God.
- He was crucified according to the purposes of God as atoning sacrifice.
- He was raised from the dead and subsequently appeared to the disciples.
- Jesus was exalted by God and given the name “Lord.”
- He gave the Holy Spirit to form a community of followers of the way.
- He will return in judgement and the restoration of the kingdom.
- Everyone who hears this message must repent of their sins and be baptized.

Kerygma

The seven essentials broken down

1. ***God loves you and has a plan for your life.*** – Yes, God the Father loves you and seeks you. And that ache in your heart, that longing, that yearning, and that “never satisfied” quality in your desires all point to God and he has written his name in your heart. He wants to turn you away from a passing and unsatisfying world, towards him. He wants to save you and prepare you to live with him for all eternity. He wants to fill the God sized hole in your heart and its infinite longing with his infinite Love.

2. ***Sin will destroy you.*** – Nothing is so destructive in your life and this world as sin. It is desire gone wrong, it is rooted in the lie that the creature rather than the Creator can help and save us. Cultivating sin will put you in bondage to desires gone mad that will not ultimately be satisfied. Satan is lying to you and saying that rebellion from the One who made you will bring happiness to you. It will not. And you know this already, don't you? Sin and indulgence do not ultimately satisfy. The world cannot satisfy, for it is finite and your desire is infinite. Sin does not ultimately bring happiness, it brings bondage, addiction, dissatisfaction, and ultimately resentment and spiritual death.

3. ***Christ Jesus died to save you.*** – Into this mess of our wayward desires and our foolish grasping at worldly trinkets, Jesus came. He met the woman at the well (who is us) and told her that everyone who drinks from this well (the world) will be thirsty again. In other words, the world cannot ultimately satisfy or save us. We must die to this world and rise to God. But our way to God was cut off by sin. Jesus came and reopened the way to the Father by dying to this world, to its lies and false claims. Rising and Ascending he has re-opened the way to the Father, our hearts true desire. Now we can be saved by being led back to the Father by the saving power of Jesus. And dying to this world, we can one day fully be satisfied by God.

4. ***Repent and believe the Gospel.*** – To repent means to come to a new mind, to come to understand and accept all that has been stated: that the Lord loves me, is calling me in my desires, and wants to save me from the sinful drives that will destroy me. It is time for me to come to believe in this Love God has for me and accept the promise and salvation of his love: Jesus Christ and the saving truth he proclaims.

5. ***Be Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.*** – And thus, in Baptism our sins are washed away, we are incorporated into Christ, we become a member of his body. And having done so, the Holy Spirit, the life, love, serenity, joy and wisdom of God comes to dwell in me and begins a work of transforming me, that includes the other Sacraments as well.

6. ***Abide in Christ and his body the Church.*** – Grow in this relationship with Jesus and His Father in the Holy Spirit by living in the life of the Church, which is Jesus' presence and Body in this world. Abide there, go on dwelling there.

7. ***Go make disciples.*** – And so, the cycle repeats with the newly evangelized and more deeply rooted Christian calling others.

“...and remember, I will be with you until the close of the age” **Matthew 28:20**

Seven Elements of the Kerygma

The “Elevator Speech!”

1. God loves you and has a plan for your life.
2. Sin will destroy you.
3. Christ Jesus died to save you.
4. Repent and believe the Gospel.
5. Be Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.
6. Abide in Christ and his body the Church.
7. Go make disciples.

Commit these to memory as a tool when given the opportunity to share your faith.

