

# FROM CHRISTENDOM TO APOSTOLIC MISSION

Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age



**Study Guide**

[www.sfcatholic.org/discipleship/apostolic-mission/](http://www.sfcatholic.org/discipleship/apostolic-mission/)



# FROM CHRISTENDOM TO APOSTOLIC MISSION

## Session One

### **Introduction**

We are living in a “change of ages,” in which the Church’s perennial responsibility to adapt to cultural realities is all the more urgent.

### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- “Taking the temperature” in our parish/school/family: where are we at?
- What are our current pastoral & evangelical strategies?

# FROM CHRISTENDOM TO APOSTOLIC MISSION

## Session One - Continued

### **Chapter One: The Place of a Ruling Imaginative Vision in Human Cultures**

Every person and indeed every culture operates with a given set of assumptions about the nature of reality: a worldview or imaginative vision; our culture is transitioning from a place in which Christianity is the dominant cultural influence (“Christendom”) to one in which it is merely one influence among others (“Apostolic age”).

### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- If you polled your parish/school/family about “how are things going?” what do you think are the subconscious criteria that people would use to answer that question? Finances? Physical health? Relationships? Spiritual vitality? Other? Which would be most important?
- What are the ways in which our larger culture does and does not correspond with the Catholic imagination?

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## Session Two

### **Chapter Two: Christendom and Apostolic Modes-Advantages and Challenges**

This chapter presents both the advantages and challenges found in a Christendom culture and in an Apostolic time.

#### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- Has your parish/school/family been operating out of a Christendom or Apostolic approach?
- What would it look like for your institution to (more deeply) embrace an Apostolic approach?

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## Session Three

### **Chapter Three: The Current Climate**

In order for us to engage in the work of the New Evangelization and implement Bishop DeGrood's vision for our Diocese (Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship through God's Love) we must first stop approaching our age with a mindset more suited to a Christendom era.

### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- How can you help people in your parish/school/family more deeply live the Gospel?
- How can you help people in your parish/school/family see the Church for what it truly is?

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# FROM CHRISTENDOM TO APOSTOLIC MISSION

## Session Four

### **Chapter Four: Devising a Pastoral Strategy for this Transitional Time, Part I**

In order for us to engage in the work of the New Evangelization and implement Bishop DeGrood's vision for our Diocese (Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship through God's Love) we must first stop approaching our age with a mindset more suited to a Christendom era.

#### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- How might you gain an apostolic attitude yourself, and help others to do the same?
- How might you help the people in your parish/school/family remain rooted in the Church's vision?
- What are some practices that you might undertake to incarnate the Christian vision?

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## Session Five

### **Chapter Four: Devising a Pastoral Strategy for this Transitional Time, Part II**

Having seen the need to develop pastoral & evangelical strategies better-suited to an Apostolic age, this chapter addresses some key points necessary for developing those strategies.

#### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- Where are the flames of faith already burning brightly in your parish? What can you do to fan those flames even more?
- Who comes to mind as an “impressive witness”? What might you learn from them?

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## Session Six

### **Chapter Five: The Key Task: Conversion of the Mind to a New Way of Seeing, Part I**

The key task before us is to renew our minds (cf. Romans 12:2) so that we see with a Christian imaginative vision. This portion of the chapter addresses the need to do so and introduces the Christian vision.

#### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- Roughly speaking, what percentage of the people in your parish/school/family clearly have a Catholic vision?
- How can you help the rest in your institution adopt a Catholic vision?

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# FROM CHRISTENDOM TO APOSTOLIC MISSION

## Session Seven

### **Chapter Five: The Key Task: Conversion of the Mind to a New Way of Seeing, Part II**

The key task before us is to renew our minds (cf. Romans 12:2) so that we see with a Christian imaginative vision. This portion of the chapter addresses the vision which is currently prevalent in our culture.

#### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- What are some ways in which you and/or your institution as unknowingly adopted the prevailing modern way of seeing?
- How can you help others understand that they might be holding to the modern way of seeing instead of the Christian one?

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## Session Seven - Continued

### **Conclusion: Readiness to Embrace the Times We are Given**

Despite its influence, the prevailing vision is unsatisfying, precisely because it is inaccurate. We must have confidence in the Holy Spirit and His power to help ourselves and those around us embrace the true, Christian vision of reality.

### **Questions for Discussion & Action**

- What concrete actions will you take to help those in your parish/school/family discern the movement of the Spirit in our time?
- How might you help them to engage in Bishop DeGrood's vision with joy, excitement and a sense of adventure?