

## **THERE ARE “NO BYSTANDERS”!**

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Last week, *Unleash the Gospel* was re-introduced because we are being called to join with our pastor and parish leadership in discovering what the Letter means for us. Archbishop Vigneron reminds us that “every priest, deacon, religious **and lay person**” is called “to embark upon the new evangelization.” Guidepost 6, **No Bystanders**, and Marker 5.1 on “The Laity,” teaches that each of us, and all of us together, are called in some way.

*The special calling and privilege of the lay faithful is to bring Christ into the secular world. “Since the laity, in accordance with their state of life, live in the midst of the world and its concerns, they are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardor of the spirit of Christ.” Their role is to transform every aspect of the culture through the Gospel – family life, education, government, business, the media, entertainment, sports, science, the arts. They do so both by “engaging in temporal affairs [i.e., daily lives] and ordering them according to the plan of God” and by “revealing Christ by word to those around them.”*

*The engagement of every layperson, according to their gifts and state in life, is essential for the mission of the Church to be fulfilled. “Each member of the lay faithful should always be fully aware of being a ‘member of the Church’ yet entrusted with a unique task which cannot be done by another and which is to be fulfilled for the good of all.” Each one should reflect on how the Lord is calling them to bring the Gospel into their particular spheres of influence both through their deeds and their words.*

This can be daunting! We may not know what our role is, or what gifts we have for the good of the Church. We may not yet be aware of what unique task has been entrusted to us. But we are not alone. Last week, Msgr. Rice wrote of his hopes for our parish, hopes in great harmony with the vision of *Unleash the Gospel*. He hopes we come **together** to pray better, reach out more to others, and effectively hand on the faith to our youth. He hopes our parish will encourage and support all ministries.

*Unleash the Gospel* makes clear there is a role for each one of us in fulfilling Msgr. Rice’s hopes for our parish. We are not on our own. Msgr. Rice reminded us we are working together “with God’s blessing.” Besides each other, we also know the Spirit of Christ guides us. Let us continue to pray for God’s blessing as we reflect on *Unleash the Gospel* and prepare ourselves to become a parish on mission:

***Come Holy Spirit.  
Fill the hearts of your faithful,  
and kindle in them the fire of your love. Amen.***