

IMPORTANT: Please read the Teachers' Notes on the basic **KERYGMA** first.

## EVANGELIZATION

Having heard the KERYGMA, we understand that “*whoever is in Christ is a new creation*” because “*God has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ*” (2 Cor 5:17,18) and Jesus has entrusted to us the message of reconciliation to God: “*Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature*” (Mk 16:15). This is what we call **evangelization**.

### WHAT DOES EVANGELIZATION MEAN?

The word **evangelization** comes from the Latin *evangelii* which means **Gospel** – the **Good News** that God has become Man in Jesus Christ and through his death and Resurrection he has rescued each of us from sin, Satan and eternal death so that we may have *new life in the Holy Spirit* through faith and Baptism.

### WHAT IS THE NEW LIFE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

- The Holy Spirit communicates to us “the new life, which is to **‘know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ’** (Jn17:3).” (*Catechism* 684)
- “From this **loving knowledge** of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to ‘evangelize’, and to lead others to the ‘yes’ of faith in Jesus Christ.” (*Catechism* 429)

NOTE: It is the **gift of faith** which enables us to KNOW God, not just know about him.

“Man’s faculties make him capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a personal God. But for man to be able to enter into *real intimacy* with him, God willed to both reveal himself to man and to give him the grace of being able to welcome this revelation in faith.” (*Catechism* 35)

Pope Benedict XVI added: “Faith does not just mean accepting a certain number of abstract truths... Faith consists in an intimate relationship with Christ”... “One does not really know a person if one knows about this person second hand.”

Pope Saint John Paul II: “Faith...is neither an abstract discourse nor a vague religious sentiment, but a personal encounter with Christ who gives new meaning to life.” ... “Without the vibrance of this encounter, Christianity becomes a soulless religious traditionalism...”

### WHY SHOULD WE EVANGELIZE?

Jesus himself is the Good News of God; he is the unique Saviour of the world - of every person who has ever lived or ever will live (cf. *Catechism* 605).

Pope Saint Paul VI wrote: “**The presentation of the Gospel message is not an optional contribution for the Church. It is the duty incumbent upon her by the command of the Lord Jesus, so that people can believe and be saved. This message is indeed necessary. It is unique. It cannot be replaced ... It is a question of people’s salvation ... It is truth.**” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 5)

## HOW SHOULD WE EVANGELIZE?

- Evangelization is, “the proclamation of CHRIST by word and the testimony of life” (*Catechism* 905).
- All Christians by the example of their lives and the witness of their word, wherever they live, have an obligation to manifest the new man which they have put on in Baptism, and to reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by whom they were strengthened at Confirmation. (*Ad Gentes* 11, *Catechism* 2472)
- This witness of life, however, is not the sole element in the apostolate; the true apostle is on the lookout for occasions of announcing Christ by word, either to unbelievers ... or to the faithful. (*Catechism* 905)
- Even the finest witness [of life] will prove ineffective in the long run if it is not ... made explicit by a clear and unequivocal **proclamation of the Lord Jesus**. (Saint Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 22)

**In summary**, Pope Saint Paul VI tells us that “the Good News of Jesus Christ [is] proclaimed through two fundamental commands:

1. ‘Put on the new self’ (cf. Eph 4:24, 2:15; Col 3:10, Gal 3:27; Rom 13:14)
2. ‘Be reconciled to God’ (2 Cor 5:15).” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 2)

**“JESUS CALLS TO CONVERSION... ‘repent, and believe in the gospel’ (Mk 1:15).”** (*Catechism* 1427)

## **REFLECTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

To be able to teach our students about evangelisation we need to personally understand the subject ourselves. Let’s look at two of the quotes from the previous page.

**1. *The Holy Spirit communicates to us “the new life, which is to ‘know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ’ (Jn17:3).”*** (*Catechism* 684)

We know that we receive this *new life in the Holy Spirit* through Baptism and Faith.

- Have you experienced this *new life*? If not, why not? If you have, can you explain why it is different from your old life?
- Do the explanations of FAITH, given by Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Saint John Paul II, resonate with your own understanding of FAITH? If not, what has been your understanding of FAITH?
- What do you think is meant by the following scripture verses and the explanatory footnote?

*“And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever possesses the Son has life, whoever does not possess the Son does not have life.”* (1 Jn 5:11-12)

**Footnote** (*New American Bible*): To possess the Son is not acceptance of a doctrine but of a person who lives now and provides life.

**2. *“From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to ‘evangelize’, and to lead others to the ‘yes’ of faith in Jesus Christ.”*** (*Catechism* 429)

- Note that the desire to proclaim Jesus (to *evangelize*) comes from a “*loving knowledge of Christ*.” Pope Saint Paul VI wrote that this is the proof of someone’s conversion; that it is inconceivable to have met the Word of God Himself and not proclaim him to others (cf. *EN* 24). Can you think of examples from the Gospels or the lives of the saints that illustrate this?
- What might make us hesitant to proclaim Jesus to others?

### Pope Benedict XVI gave us an encouraging homily when he was installed as the Vicar of Christ.

*Are we not perhaps all afraid in some way? If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to him, are we not afraid that he might take something away from us? Are we not perhaps afraid to give up something significant, something unique, something that makes life so beautiful? Do we not then risk ending up diminished and deprived of our freedom? [Pope John Paul II] said: No! If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed. Only in this friendship do we experience beauty and liberation.*

*And so, today, with great strength and great conviction, on the basis of long personal experience of life, I say to you, dear young people: **Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything.** When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open wide the doors to Christ - and you will find true life. Amen.*

### Pope Francis invites everyone to encounter Jesus.

*I invite all Christians everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”. **The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.***

*Now is the time to say to Jesus: “Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace.” (EG 3)*