

10 Things Pope Francis Wants You to Know about Evangelization

Kevin Cotter

Praise for Pope Francis continues from people of all sorts of backgrounds. The media, the public, and the members of the Catholic Church continue to hang on his words and his actions. Pope Francis has the amazing knack for preaching while embodying this preaching with his own life. He is not simply a great marketer for the Church; he is a model of evangelization that we can all learn a lot from. Pope Francis has been trying to tell us more and more about how he hopes the Church can evangelize.

Here is my list of 10 things Pope Francis wants you to know about evangelization:

Everyone is Meant to Evangelize

Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love.—*Evangelii Gaudium*

Want Authentic Personal Fulfillment? Evangelize

When the Church summons Christians to take up the task of evangelization, she is simply pointing to the source of authentic personal fulfillment. For "here we discover a profound law of reality: that life is attained and matures in the measure that it is offered up in order to give life to others. This is certainly what mission means".—*Evangelii Gaudium*

Evangelization Starts with Our Own Relationship with Jesus

The spread of the Gospel is not guaranteed either by the number of persons, or by the prestige of the institution, or by the quantity of available resources. What counts is to be permeated by the love of Christ, to let oneself be led by the Holy Spirit and to graft one's own life onto the tree of life, which is the Lord's Cross.—Homily, Mass with Seminarians and Novices, July 7, 2013

We Must Witness the Faith with Our Lives

If you happen to be with an atheist who tells you that he does not believe in God, you can read him the whole library, where it says that God exists, and where it is proven that God exists, and he will not believe. [However] if in the presence of this same atheist you witness to a consistent, Christian life, something will begin to work in his heart.... It will be your witness that brings him the restlessness on which the Holy Spirit works.—Homily, Domus Sanctae Marthae, February 27, 2014

An Evangelizer Must be Joyful

Consequently, an evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral! ... And may the world of our time, which is searching, sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope, be enabled to receive the good news not from evangelizers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervour, who have first received the joy of Christ".—*Evangelii Gaudium*

We Must Encounter People to Evangelize

Be servants of communion and of the culture of encounter! I would like you to be almost obsessed about this. Be so without being presumptuous, imposing “our truths,” but rather be guided by the humble yet joyful certainty of those who have been found, touched and transformed by the Truth who is Christ, ever to be proclaimed.—Homily, World Youth Day, July 27, 2013

We Must Know How to Give an Initial Proclamation of Jesus

On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: “Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.... nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful and wisdom-filled than that initial proclamation.” —*Evangelii Gaudium*

Get Out of Our Comfort Zone

I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the center and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures.—*Evangelii Gaudium*

Evangelizers Love People

Evangelizers thus take on the “smell of the sheep” and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance. —*Evangelii Gaudium*

Everyone Needs to be Evangelized

Jesus teaches us that the Good News, which he brings, is not reserved to one part of humanity, it is to be communicated to everyone.—Angelus, January 26, 2014