



## On Evangelization by Joe Sixpack

One of our two primary obligations is to share the faith. I get a real kick out of watching people's reaction when I tell them that. You'd think I just told them they have to go into a terrorist camp and take out all the camp occupants with a broken, rusty bladed pocket knife and no back-up. The idea of having to share the Catholic faith with other people is the stuff nightmares are made of for most folks.

Evangelization is really not that difficult. Even if you're a complete wallflower, you can still play a role in evangelization. I'll save the various means of evangelization for next week, but for now I want to talk about just who all we need to evangelize.

The very first classification of souls to evangelize is none other than your fellow Catholics. Yup, you read that right; your fellow Catholics. Firstly, we all need to have a genuine conversion of heart every day. You do, I do, even the pope does. But this actually goes much deeper than that.

### **Did you know...**

- one out of every 10 Americans is an ex-Catholic
- if they were a separate denomination, they would be the third-largest denomination in the United States, after Catholics and Baptists
- one of three people who were raised Catholic no longer identifies as Catholic
- 6.5 people leave Catholicism for every one that joins
- 50% of young people who were raised Catholic are no longer Catholic today
- and 79% of former Catholics leave the Church before age 23

Do you know why that is? Read what Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke wrote in a letter to me in October 2015.

*"A gravely defective catechesis which marked the life of the Church in the years following the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, though not because of the Council, contributed to the loss of faith, the lack of a devotional life and left the subsequent generations devoid of a concrete way to know the Catholic faith and live it."*

His Eminence is absolutely correct. Most Catholics—perhaps as many as 95%—suffer from catechetical illiteracy. That's a kind way of saying they are completely ignorant of what the

Catholic Church teaches. If they knew exactly what the Church teaches—I'm talking about unvarnished Catholic truth that isn't watered down milquetoast—most of those listed in the statistics above would still be Catholic. But the simple fact of the matter is that they don't.

That automatically means the next group of people to be evangelized is non-practicing and lapsed Catholics. You know lots of people in that category; we all do. Perhaps you have close friends or family who are non-practicing or lapsed Catholics. You're obligated to share the faith with them.

*"But, Joe, doing that might soil or ruin my relationship with them."* Tough! Who is your first obligation to: your friends & family, or Jesus? Before you answer that, you might want to stop here and read what Jesus said in Revelation 3:15-16.

The final group of people to reach out to is non-Catholics. Most of the non-Catholics I reach out to are cultivated one-on-one. They're the result of general conversations with people I meet—no one talks to me long before I turn the subject to religion—and these are folks God just places in my path. He places people in every Catholic's path all the time; we just have to make ourselves aware.

For the benefit of those of you who are among the faint of heart, I'd like to digress here for a moment to deal with the notion of avoiding controversial topics. **Let me state emphatically that I never talk about controversial subjects. Ever.** Therefore, I never talk about organized sports or soap operas, but religion is wide open for discussion. Why? Because religion deals with objective truth, and objective truth cannot possibly be controversial.  $2+2=4$ ; is there anything controversial about that? Certainly not! That's not to say, however, that people don't get emotional about truth—especially when that truth threatens what they choose to believe. After all, there is still a Flat Earth Society. I'm not kidding; look it up.

It's been my experience that people only get emotional about religion when they're not confident in their knowledge of the topic. And the reason people aren't confident in their knowledge is because they really don't love God enough to bother to learn about Him—especially in our modern world. So the key to carrying on a conversation about religion is to know what you're talking about. Then you can remain calm, and that will almost always keep the person you're talking to calm. (HINT: You can learn all you need to know by reading these articles every week, and by visiting the [JoeSixpackAnswers.com](http://JoeSixpackAnswers.com) website.)

Evangelization is every Catholic's obligation. It doesn't have to be the dreaded task most people think it is. In fact, if you're devoutly practicing your faith, it shouldn't be hard at all, because what matters most in your life is what you'll talk about the most; and if our holy and ancient faith doesn't mean more to you than anything else, you may want to re-examine your priorities. That's What We Believe... Why We Believe It.

Do you need to learn more about the faith? Visit [JoeSixpackAnswers.com](http://JoeSixpackAnswers.com) and sign up for my *free* email course, and each lesson will arrive in your inbox every three days. When you sign up for the email course, you'll also get exclusive invitations to *free* webinars I host every week. There are a lot of other things to help you with your faith coming soon.