

Evangelization and Catechesis

A Catechist's Prayer of Faith

Lord Jesus, eternal Word of God made flesh for our salvation, I thank you for calling me to serve as a faithful echo of your Voice to your people. In Baptism, you consecrated me as a prophet called to proclaim the Good News of your saving love; and in Confirmation, you sealed and sent me into the world to boldly witness to the word of your Cross. Strengthen me now in my work, enkindle in me a deeper love of the Sacred Scriptures as they have been handed down to me in your holy Church, and make me holy that I myself might embody in truth the very Word I dare to proclaim.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Evangelization in the Modern World, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI, 8 Dec. 1975

14. “Evangelization is the special grace and vocation of the church. It is her essential function. The church exists to preach the gospel, that is to preach and teach the word of God so that through her the gift of grace may be given to us, sinners may be reconciled to God, and the sacrifice of the Mass, the memorial of his glorious death and resurrection, may be perpetuated.”

15. “Evangelization is inherent in the very nature of the church. . . The church takes its origin from the work of evangelization by Christ and the twelve apostles. Of this work she is the natural fruition. . . Drawing its origin from this mission, the **church in her turn is sent forth by Jesus himself.** She remains in the world while the Lord of Glory returns to the Father. . . She protracts and perpetuates his presence.”

“The proclamation of the good news to men has been entrusted to the church. . . **The church, having been herself sent forth and evangelized, sends out evangelizers in her turn.** . . She hands on to them the mandate which she has herself received and **sends them out to preach, not to preach themselves or their personal ideas, but rather the gospel of which neither they nor the church herself are the absolute masters, free to dispose of as they wish, but rather the ministers charged to hand it on with complete fidelity.**”

18. “The church appreciates that evangelization means the **carrying forth of the good news** to every sector of the human race **so that by its strength it may enter into the hearts of men and renew the human race.** . . **It is the aim of evangelization, therefore, to effect this interior transformation.** . . In a word, the church may be truly said to evangelize when, solely in virtue of that news which she proclaims, she seeks to convert both the individual consciences of men and their collective conscience, all the activities in which they are engaged and, finally, their lives and the whole environment which surrounds them.”

44. “Catechetical instruction is another instrument of evangelization which must on no account be neglected. A systematic course of religious instruction should lead the minds of all and especially those of children and adolescents to an understanding of the principal components of that living treasure of truth which God has been pleased to communicate to us and which the church in the course of her long history has always been zealous to enunciate ever more comprehensively. **No one will deny that this doctrine is to be imparted, not as a mere intellectual exercise, but in order to inculcate the Christian way of life.**”

It is essential that the form of teaching be adapted to the age, the educational level and the intellectual capacity of the individuals and that care be taken to implant the necessary truths firmly in the memory, mind and heart so that they may exercise a profound influence on the whole life of their hearers.