

VATICAN COUNCIL II, CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
and THE GENERAL DIRECTORY OF CATECHESIS

1963

SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM 9 . The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church. Before men can come to the liturgy they must be called *to faith and to conversion*. (The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in quoting this text in 1072, calls faith and conversion as *evangelization*)

1965

AD GENTES 6 (1965) "Missions" is the term usually given to those particular undertakings by which the heralds of the Gospel, sent out by the Church and going forth into the whole world, carry out the task of preaching the Gospel and planting the Church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ. These undertakings are brought to completion by missionary activity and are mostly exercised in certain territories recognized by the Holy See. *The proper purpose of this missionary activity is evangelization*, and the planting of the Church among those peoples and groups where it has not yet taken root.(14)

AG 41. Laymen cooperate in the Church's work of evangelization; as witnesses and at the same time as living instruments, they share in her saving mission;(10) especially if they have been called by God and have been accepted by the bishop for this work. *In those lands which are already Christian, laymen cooperate in the work of evangelization by nurturing in themselves and in others a knowledge and love of the missions...*

APOSTOLICAM ACTOSITATEM 19 (1965) There is a great variety of associations in the apostolate. Some set before themselves the broad apostolic purpose of the Church; *others aim to evangelize and sanctify in a special way*. Some purpose to infuse a Christian spirit into the temporal order; others bear witness to Christ in a special way through works of mercy and charity.

1992

CATHECISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH 429 (1992) 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

CCC905 (1992) " Lay people also fulfill their prophetic mission by *evangelization, "that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life."* For lay people, "this evangelization . . . acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world."

1997

GENERAL DIRECTORY OF CATECHESIS dedicates Chapters 1 and 2 to **EVANGELIZATION**, and the relationship of Evangelization and Catechesis, Para #36 – 76

49. *The Process of Evangelization , consequently, is structured in stages or "essential moments";* missionary activity directed towards non-believers and those who live in religious indifference; initial catechetical activity for those who choose the Gospeland pastoral activity directed towards the Christian faithful of mature faith in the bosom of the Christian Community.

THE POPES SINCE VATICAN II AND EVANGELIZATION



POPE PAUL VI

In 1975, on the 10th Anniversary of the Closing of Vatican Council II, Pope Paul VI Issued the “Magna Carta” of Evangelization in the Catholic Church - [*Evangelii Nuntiandi*](#) - (Evangelization in the Modern World). In #2 he outlines the objectives of VII: *“to make the Church of the twentieth century ever better fitted **for proclaiming the Gospel** to the people of the twentieth century.”* Pope Paul VI sought to implement the teachings and recommendations of VII in the Church stating that famous quote that *“the Church exists to evangelize”*.

#14 Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize

#15 The Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself.

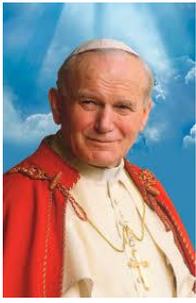
#22 There is no true evangelization if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed. The history of the Church, from the discourse of Peter on the morning of Pentecost onwards, has been intermingled and identified with the history of this proclamation. At every new phase of human history, the Church, constantly gripped by the desire to evangelize, has but one preoccupation: whom to send to proclaim the mystery of Jesus? In what way is this mystery to be proclaimed? How can one ensure that it will resound and reach all those who should hear it? **This proclamation - kerygma, preaching or catechesis - occupies such an important place in evangelization that it has often become synonymous with it; and yet it is only one aspect of evangelization.**

#45. Our century is characterized by the mass media or means of social communication, and the first proclamation, catechesis or the further deepening of faith cannot do without these means, as we have already emphasized. When they are put at the service of the Gospel, they are capable of increasing almost indefinitely the area in which the Word of God is heard; they enable the Good News to reach millions of people.

#46. For this reason, side by side with the collective proclamation of the Gospel, **the other form of transmission, the person-to-person one, remains valid and important.** The Lord often used it (for example, with Nicodemus, Zacchaeus, the Samaritan woman, Simon the Pharisee), and so did the apostles. In the long run, is there any other way of handing on the Gospel than by transmitting to another person one's personal experience of faith?

#70. Lay people, whose particular vocation places them in the midst of the world and in charge of the most varied temporal tasks, must for this very reason exercise a very special form of evangelization. Their primary and immediate task is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community- this is the specific role of the pastors- but to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media.

#75. Evangelization will never be possible without the action of the Holy Spirit....techniques of evangelization are good but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit. The most perfect preparation of the evangelizer has no effect without the Holy Spirit.



POPE JOHN PAUL II

During his papacy Pope John Paul II travelled to 129 countries on 104 foreign trips and he has been one of the greatest evangelizers. In 1983, in an address to the Bishops in Haiti, for the first time he used the term **NEW EVANGELIZATION stating that Evangelization has TO BE NEW IN METHODS, EXPRESSION AND ZEAL**. He was a most prolific writer on Christocentricity and Evangelization and his Encyclical *REDEMPTORIS MISSIO* (*Mission of the Redeemer*) was a landmark document on the urgency of Missionary Activity of the Church.

REDEMPTORIS MISSIO (1990)

#1. The mission of Christ the Redeemer, which is entrusted to the Church, is still very far from completion. this mission is still only beginning and **that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service**. It is the Spirit who impels us to proclaim the great works of God: "For if I preach the Gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Cor 9: 16) **In the name of the whole Church, I sense an urgent duty to repeat this cry of St. Paul.**

#3. God is opening before the Church the horizons of a humanity more fully prepared for the sowing of the Gospel. I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission ad gentes. **No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.**

#8. Proclaiming Christ and bearing witness to him, when done in a way that respects consciences, does not violate freedom. Faith demands a free adherence on the part of man, but at the same time faith must also be offered to him, because **the "multitudes have the right to know the riches of the mystery of Christ-**riches in which we believe that the whole of humanity can find, in unsuspected fullness, everything that it is gropingly searching for concerning God, man and his destiny, life and death, and truth....

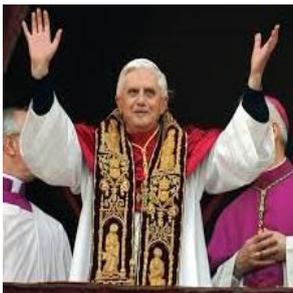
#15. The kingdom aims at transforming human relationships; it grows gradually as people slowly learn to love, forgive and serve one another The kingdom is the concern of everyone: individuals, society, and the world. Working for the kingdom means acknowledging and promoting God's activity, which is present in human history and transforms it. Building the kingdom means working for liberation from evil in all its forms.

#30. Our own time, with humanity on the move and in continual search, demands a resurgence of the Church's missionary activity. The horizons and possibilities for mission are growing ever wider, and we Christians are called to an apostolic courage based upon trust in the Holy Spirit. **He is the principal agent of mission!**

#44. Proclamation is the permanent priority of mission. The Church cannot elude Christ's explicit mandate, nor deprive men and women of the "Good News" about their being loved and saved by God. "Evangelization will always contain-as the foundation, centre and at the same time the summit of its dynamism-a clear proclamation that, in Jesus Christ...salvation is offered to all people, as a gift of God's grace and mercy....**it has a central and irreplaceable role....**

#46. The proclamation of the Word of God has Christian conversion as its aim: a complete and sincere adherence to Christ and his Gospel through faith.

#51. "Ecclesial Basic Communities" as a Force for Evangelization. A rapidly growing phenomenon in the young churches - one sometimes fostered by the bishops and their Conferences as a pastoral priority - is that of "ecclesial basic communities" (also known by other names) which **are proving to be good centres for Christian formation and missionary outreach.** These are groups of Christians who, at the level of the family or in a similarly restricted setting, come together for prayer, Scripture reading, catechesis, and discussion on human and ecclesial problems with a view to a common commitment. **These communities are a sign of vitality within the Church, an instrument of formation and evangelization.**



POPE BENEDICT XVI

In 2010 Pope Benedict established the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization to further disseminate the urgency of Proclaiming Christ not only to non-believers but also to baptised persons who may be living in indifference to their faith. In October 2012 he called a Synod of Bishops to reflect and study *"The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith"*. In 2010 he also issued an encyclical on the Word of God, *Verbum Domini*, in which he urges Catholics to use the Word of God as a resource for Evangelization and Formation.

DEUS CARITAS EST (2005)

#1. We have come to believe in God's love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. **Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.**

VERBUM DOMINI (2010)

#94. Since the entire People of God is a people which has been "sent", the Synod reaffirmed that **"the mission of proclaiming the word of God is the task of all of the disciples of Jesus Christ based on their Baptism"**. [315] **No believer in Christ can feel dispensed from this responsibility** which comes from the fact of our sacramentally belonging to the Body of Christ. A consciousness of this must be revived in every family, parish, community, association and ecclesial movement..... **the ecclesial movements and the new communities are a great force for evangelization in our times** and an incentive to the development of new ways of proclaiming the Gospel.

#96. At the dawn of the third millennium not only are there still many peoples who have not come to know the Good News, but also **a great many Christians who need to have the word of God once more persuasively proclaimed to them, so that they can concretely experience the power of the Gospel. Many of our brothers and sisters are "baptized, but insufficiently evangelized"**

#122. **Our own time, then, must be increasingly marked by a new hearing of God's word and a new evangelization.** Recovering the centrality of the divine word in the Christian life leads us to appreciate anew the deepest meaning of the forceful appeal of Pope John Paul II: to pursue the *missio ad gentes* and vigorously to embark upon the new evangelization, especially in those nations where the Gospel has been forgotten or meets with indifference as a result of widespread secularism. **May the Holy Spirit awaken a hunger and thirst for the word of God, and raise up zealous heralds and witnesses of the Gospel.**

QUOTES OF POPE BENEDICT DURING THE ANGELUS

"The rediscovery of the value of one's baptism is the basis of the missionary commitment of every Christian, because we see in the Gospel that he who lets himself be fascinated by Christ cannot do without witnessing the joy of following in his footsteps... we understand even more that, in virtue of baptism, we have an inherent missionary vocation." - October 29, 2006

"The primary contribution that the Church offers to the development of mankind and peoples does not consist merely in material means or technical solutions. Rather, it involves the proclamation of the truth of Christ." - February 1, 2006



POPE FRANCIS

With Pope Benedict's resignation in February 2013, it was up to the new Pope, Francis, to write the Apostolic Exhortation as a follow up to the October 2012 Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization. *EVANGELII GAUDIUM, THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL*, is another landmark on Evangelization in which the Pope encourages a new chapter in evangelization calling all Christians to become Missionary Disciples, the Church to be outward looking reaching out to the poor and the marginalised, and calling on Parishes to move from a Maintenance mode to a Missionary Mode.

EVANGELII GAUDIUM - THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

#1. The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. **In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come.**

#11. A renewal of preaching can offer believers, as well as the lukewarm and the non-practising, new joy in the faith and fruitfulness in the work of evangelization. The heart of its message will always be the same: the God who revealed his immense love in the crucified and risen Christ.

#14. The Synod reaffirmed that **the new evangelization is a summons addressed to all** and that it is carried out in three principal settings . . . *ordinary pastoral ministry.... The baptised whose lives do not reflect the demands of Baptism..... to those who do not know Jesus or who have rejected Him.....***Christians have the duty to proclaim the Gospel without excluding anyone.**

#27. I dream of a "missionary option", that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself.

#46. A Church which "goes forth" is a Church whose doors are open. Going out to others in order to reach the fringes of humanity **#49. 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 centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures. If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life.

#74. What is called for is an evangelization capable of shedding light on these new ways of relating to God, to others and to the world around us, and inspiring essential values. It must reach the places where new narratives and paradigms are being formed, **bringing the word of Jesus to the inmost soul of our cities.**

#120. In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples" called to mature in our work as evangelizers to have better training, a deepening love and a clearer witness to the Gospel.

#165. We must not think that in **catechesis** the kerygma gives way to a supposedly more “solid” formation. **Nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful and wisdom-filled than that initial proclamation. All Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the kerygma,** which is reflected in and constantly illumines, the work of catechesis, thereby enabling us to understand more fully the significance of every subject which the latter treats. It is the message capable of responding to the desire for the infinite which abides in every human heart.

#174/5 Not only the homily has to be nourished by the word of God. **All evangelization is based on that word, listened to, meditated upon, lived, celebrated and witnessed to. The sacred Scriptures are the very source of evangelization.** Consequently, we need to be constantly trained in hearing the word. The Church does not evangelize unless she constantly lets herself be evangelized **the study of the Sacred Scriptures must be a door opened to every believer.**

#186. Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society’s most neglected members.

#259. Spirit-filled evangelizers means evangelizers fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit. Let us call upon him today, firmly rooted in prayer, for without prayer all our activity risks being fruitless and our message empty. Jesus wants evangelizers who proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all by a life transfigured by God’s presence.

#261. Spirit-filled evangelization is not the same as a set of tasks dutifully carried out despite one’s own personal inclinations and wishes. **How I long to find the right words to stir up enthusiasm for a new chapter of evangelization full of fervour, joy, generosity, courage, boundless love and attraction! Yet I realize that no words of encouragement will be enough unless the fire of the Holy Spirit burns in our hearts.** A spirit-filled evangelization is one guided by the Holy Spirit, for he is the soul of the Church called to proclaim the Gospel. Before offering some spiritual motivations and suggestions, **I once more invoke the Holy Spirit. I implore him to come and renew the Church, to stir and impel her to go forth boldly to evangelize all peoples.**