

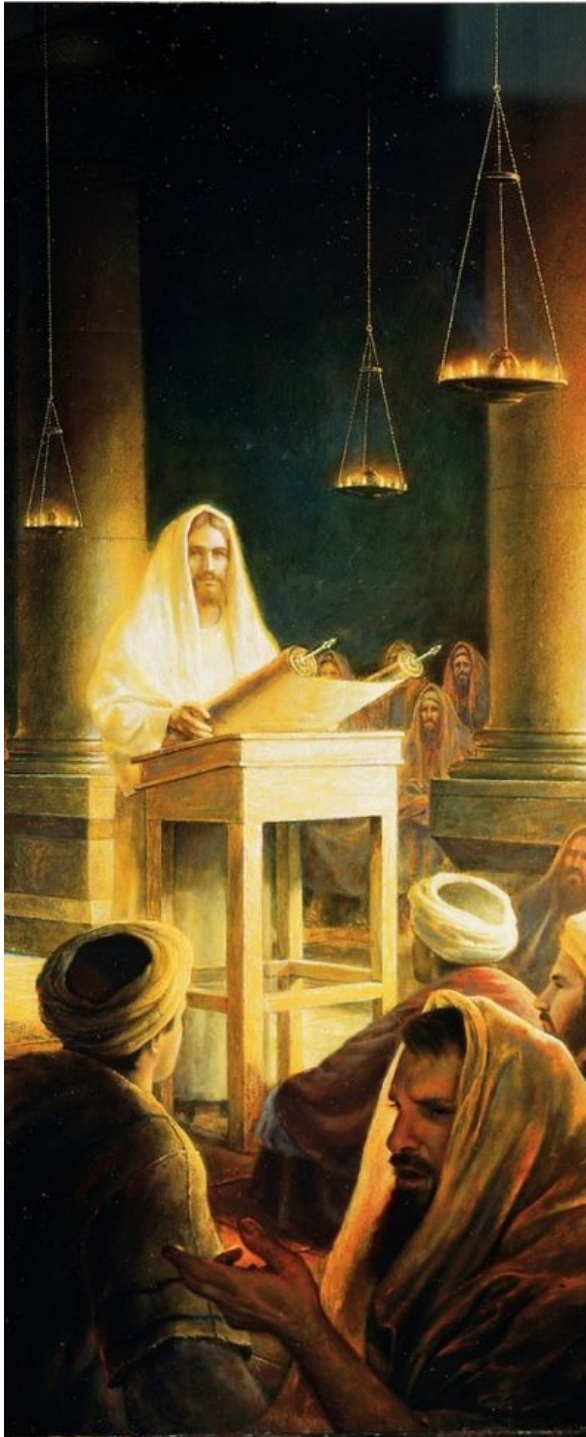
The Heart of the New Evangelization: Meeting, Knowing and Loving Jesus Back



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In His Name Virtual Conference

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What is the New Evangelization?

- Outreach to those who have been baptized but who are not living the faith, who are structuring their life either without God altogether or without the Sacraments and the Church.
- Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have all emphasized it.
- It's an re-proposal of the faith to those in whom the Gospel really hasn't sunk to the level it should. It's distinguished from "mission" proper and "pastoral care."
- John Paul II first used the phrase in 1979 and underlined that it's not a new "message" but a freshness in "method, ardor and expression."
- Many examples: Word on Fire, Augustine Institute, Dynamic Catholic, Ascension Press, Alpha, Evangelion, Legion of Mary, Neocatechumenal Way, new movements, many websites, videos and podcasts.



Why is the New Evangelization Needed?

- “A large part of today’s humanity does not find the Gospel in the permanent evangelization of the Church – that is to say, the convincing response to the question: How to live.”
- “This is why we are in need of a new evangelization: if the art of living remains an unknown, nothing else works. ... To evangelize means ... to teach the art of living.”
- “At the beginning of his public life Jesus says: ‘I have come to evangelize the poor.’ This means: ‘I have the response to your fundamental question; I will show you the path of life, the path toward happiness. Rather: I am that path.’”
- “We are searching for, along with the permanent and uninterrupted and never to be interrupted evangelization, a new evangelization, capable of being heard by that world that does not find access to the ‘classic’ evangelization.”
- “This art [of living] can only be communicated by [one] who has life, who is the Gospel personified.”

Jesus Came to Teach Us

The Art of Living



- He is the response to the prayer of the Psalms, “Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth” (Ps 86:11)
- He came as the “Way, the Truth and the Life,” saying to us not just, “Do what I teach,” but “Follow me!”
- He came not just to “inform” but to “form.”
- “A disciple is not above his teacher. ... It is enough for the disciple to become like his teacher” (Mt 10:24-25)
- St. Paul labored until “Christ be formed” in others,” urging people to “train yourself in godliness,” to “have the mind of Christ” until one could say, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Eph 6:4; Gal 4:19; 1 Tim 4:7-8; 1 Cor 9:26-27; Phil 2:5; Gal 2:20).

The Stages in the Art of Living

- The *Aparecida Document* listed five overlapping stages:
 - **Encounter with Jesus** – We meet Jesus, come to know that He is alive and at work in human life, in my life, and is calling me to follow him. It begins often with the kerygma proclaimed by someone already evangelized.
 - **Conversion** – Meeting Jesus helps us to see we're not living yet as we ought, that we're being summoned to a new life, one based not on sand but on Christ as rock, seeking to live by his criteria rather than the world's.
 - **Discipleship** – “Disciple” in Greek means “student,” which in Latin means “zealous.” We're called to be on fire not just to know but to live according to what Jesus teaches us.
 - **Communion** – We are made in the image and likeness of God, who is a loving Trinitarian communion of persons. Christians are called to experience this communion, in families, parishes, movements, religious communities and more, like the first Christians who prayed, ate, and to Jerusalem together and had all things in common.
 - **Mission** – As the grow in communion with the Triune God and with each other, Christians experience the need to share the joy of the faith with others, to bring them into communion too. The same Lord who says, “Come to me,” says, “Go to the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.”

Documento — de Aparecida

Texto conclusivo da
Conferência Geral do Episcopado
Latino-Americano e do Caribe





Pope Francis on Evangelized Evangelizers

- The fruit of Christian formation is “missionary disciples in communion.”
- Preaching the Gospel is the “first task of the Church. ... What would happen if we were to take these words seriously? We would realize that missionary outreach is *paradigmatic for all the Church’s activity.*” (EG 15)
- “The primary reason for evangelizing is the love and salvation of Jesus that we have received, urging us to greater love of him. “What kind of love would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to point him out, to make him known?” (EG 264)
- “We have a treasure of life and love that cannot deceive and a message that cannot mislead or disappoint.” It ennobles us and is never out of date. (EG 265)
- It’s impossible to persevere in fervent evangelization “unless we are convinced from personal experience that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it, and not the same thing to contemplate him, to worship him, to find our peace in him, as not to. ... We know well that with Jesus life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything. This is why we evangelize.” (EG 266)



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

- Jesus does not show us just the art of living but the art of helping others to live, so that they may have life to the full (Jn 10:10).
- His three years of public ministry were not just to proclaim the Gospel himself but to form the twelve apostles, the 72 disciples and the whole Church to live and share the faith, with the help and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in perpetual Pentecost.
- We have a chance to focus on twelve lessons he teaches.



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

1. The Priority of Prayer

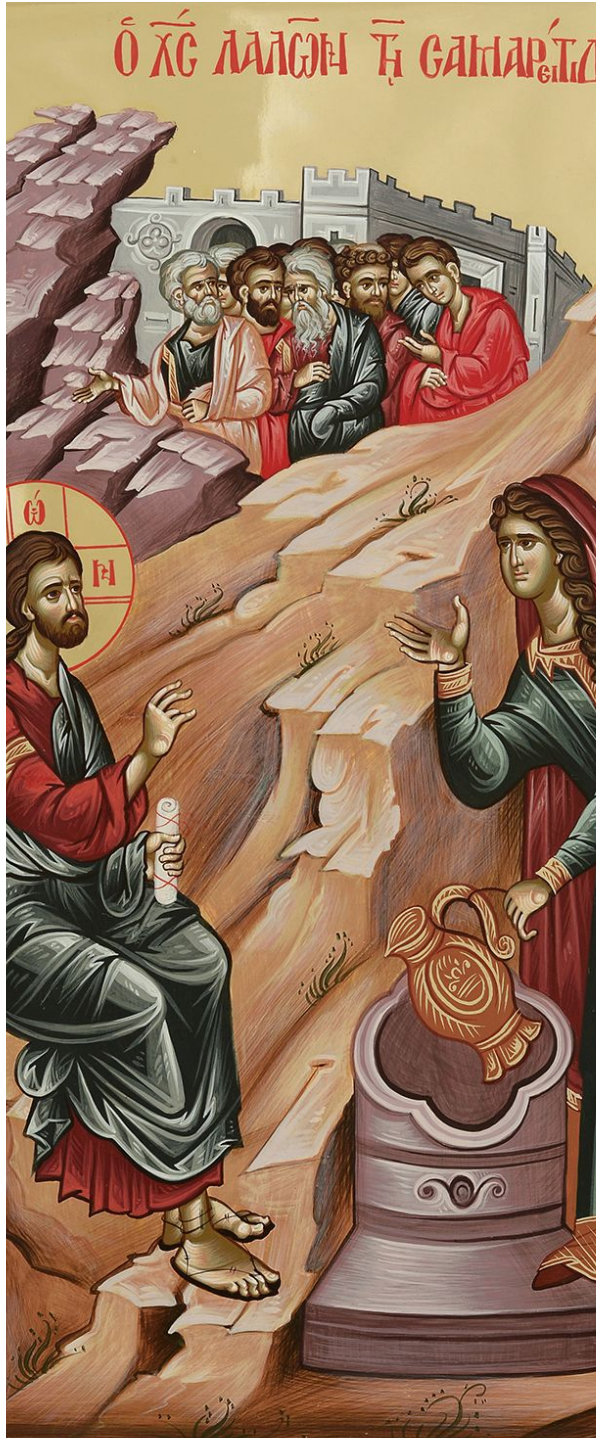
- Before Jesus called, he prayed, even spending all night in prayer before summoning the apostles.
- Jesus called us to “pray to the Master of the Harvest” for laborers for his harvest.
- We need to pray not just for the new evangelization, but for individuals, like St. Monica prayed for her husband, mother-in-law and son, St. Augustine.

2. The Parable of the Sower and the Seed

- The soil matters. Need to be aware of hardened, superficial (rocky) and distracted (thorny) soil

3. We need more than words

- In the instructions to the 12 and to the 72, Jesus focuses not just on the “message” but the “packaging.”
- We need to en flesh what we’re proclaiming: the peace of the kingdom, trust in providence, gratitude, mutual love.
- We can’t nurse failure or rejection.



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

4. We called to try to incarnate the words we preach.
 - We're called to proclaim by body language:
 - "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21).
 - "Believe what you read. Teach what you believe. Practice what you teach." (Rite of Ordination of a Deacon)
 - "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38)
 - Jesus was constantly calling us to integrity, to purity of intention (Lk 10:20). It's not those who say, "Lord, Lord," but those who do the will of God who are credible (Mt 7:21).
 - He was summoning us not to be like the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, who do not practice what they preach.

5. The Priority of the One-on-One
 - While Jesus sometimes preached to vast multitudes, he shows us that most of the work of spreading the faith is one-on-one, through the apostolate of friendship, like he showed with Nicodemus, Nathaniel, Andrew and John, Peter, Matthew, the Samaritan Woman, the Gerasene Demoniac, and many others.
 - Most fish are caught with a rod, not a dragnet.
 - Every one matters: "It's not the will of the heavenly Father that one little one be lost" (Mt 18:14)



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

6. Entering into the other's life and conversation

- Jesus entered into the conversation of the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus, leaving Jerusalem and all it symbolized, heading downhill into the night.
- Often the reason for people's departure from the faith contains the seed of their return. The two disciples were leaving because they thought Jesus' crucifixion was a contradiction of their Messianic hopes, but the anonymous Wayfarer helped them to see it was a confirmation!

7. Use of analogies and stories

- Jesus was constantly using parables with those who didn't share the faith, not just to lead them by illustration from what they knew to what they didn't know about the kingdom, but to challenge them to work, to struggle to understand the application.
- Many of his Parables continue to touch people deeply: the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Two Debtors.



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

8. The Proclamation of the Kingdom and the Call to Conversion
 - Jesus' first public words: "The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mk 1:15).
 - Ratzinger: "The Kingdom of God is not a thing. ... The Kingdom of God is God. Kingdom of God means: God exists. God is alive. God is present and acts in the world, in our, in my life. ... God is the most present and decisive reality in each and every act of my life, in each and every moment of history."
 - Once we recognize the gift of the kingdom, we turn away from counterfeits (*a-vert*), turn toward Christ (*ad-vert*) and seek to "turn with" (*con-vert*) him.
 - Ratzinger: "The Greek word for converting means to 'rethink,' to question one's own and common way of living; to allow God to enter into the criteria of one's life; to judge not merely according to the current opinions. So to convert means: not to live as all the others live, not do what all do, not to feel justified in dubious, ambiguous, evil actions just because others do the same. It means to begin to see one's life through the eyes of God; looking for the good, even if uncomfortable; not aiming at the judgment of the majority, of men, but on the justice of God—in other words: to look for a new style of life, a new life."



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

The Proclamation of the Kingdom and the Call to Conversion (continued)

- Various parables of the Kingdom show us:
 - To treat the kingdom like a treasure buried in a field, or a pearl of great price, worth more than everything else, because the Kingdom is God.
 - Not to be afraid to start small, like a mustard seed, or to act like leaven in dough.
 - To be urgent, because the fields are white and ripe for the harvest.
 - To be positive and focus on the growth of the wheat rather than negatively obsessing about the weeds.
 - To be grateful for fellow workers in the vineyard, no matter when they've arrived.

9. Preaching Preceded and Backed Up by Deeds

- Jesus' miracles both paved the way to faith as well as confirmed it. They were deeds fundamentally not of power but of mercy!
- Stupendous miracles still happen, as every cause for canonization reveals. But the greatest miracles are in the Sacraments and our whole life is supposed to be quasi-sacrament of the presence of God living within. Our charity, our mercy, is meant to precede, follow and characterize our proclamation.



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

10. A Summons to High Standards

- We shouldn't be afraid of challenging others as Jesus has challenged us. Jesus calls our standards to surpass those of the Scribes and Pharisees and the virtuous pagans. He calls us to love as he has loved, to be merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful, to be holy as the Lord our God is holy.
- This involves loving our enemies, praying for persecutors, picking up our Cross daily and following him, plucking out our eyes or chopping off our hands and feet if they lead us to sin, becoming servants of all the rest, and going and selling all that we have, giving the money to the poor, and coming to follow him.
- Watering down the faith *loses* people, because God has made people with a capacity and yearning for greatness.
- We can only proclaim this when we're striving to live it ourselves, not by our own efforts, but by God's grace.



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

11. A Willingness to Suffer for Him Who Died for Us

- Jesus sends us out as lambs in the midst of wolves, promising that if they hated him, they'd hate us, and that we'd be dragged before religious and civil authorities on account of his name, like we saw happen to St. Stephen, Saints Peter and John, St. Paul and so many of the saints and martyrs.
- Jesus was rejected by his fellow Nazarenes, by the Samaritans, by the crowds in Pilate's praetorium, by Judas, by the thief on his left, and many more. "He came to his own and his own received him not" (Jn 1:11).
- But he told us why he would permit this: "It will lead to your giving testimony" (Lk 21:13).
- How many people converted because of the witness of the martyrs? People who would not have otherwise come to the faith?



Jesus' Training to Share the Faith

12. A true “spirituality” of evangelization:

- Authentic Christian spirituality is life according to the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor” (Lk 4:18)
- He promised that we should not worry about what we are to say, because the Holy Spirit will help us to know what we are to say (Mt 10:19)
- At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down as tongues of fire: tongues to speak, fire for ardor, so that we might give joint witness together with the Holy Spirit to Christ.
- John Paul II said, “Missionary activity demands a specific spirituality, which applies in particular to all those whom God has called to be missionaries.” It includes four elements:
 - Complete docility to the Spirit – We need all his gifts!
 - Intimate communion with Christ – We need to decrease so that he may increase, we must have his mind, his heart, his burning apostolic charity.
 - Love for the Church – Christ loved the Church and gave his life up for her. We must love the Church as Christ did. “Fidelity to Christ cannot be separated from fidelity to the Church.”
 - Holiness – The universal call to holiness is closely linked to the universal call to mission. Pastoral techniques, resources, study are not enough. Every phase of mission and new evangelization has been led by saints, by people of the beatitudes. The new evangelization requires a “new ardor for holiness.”

Prayer



- The one who shows us best how to respond to Jesus' help to learn the “art of living” and to raise others to learn and live this “art” is the Blessed Virgin Mary, his most faithful disciple, who from St. John onward has been raising people to be more and more like Jesus.
- We turn to her with the prayer made to her by Pope Francis at the end of his exhortation “The Joy of the Gospel,” asking for her intercession that we might enter into her contemplative heart, which is the heart of the New Evangelization, and come to encounter the fruit of her womb at the depth he desires, to convert, to enter into his school, to join him in the Christian community, and to go out and proclaim the treasure of our faith to every creature.
- Let us pray together:



Prayer

Mary, Virgin and Mother, you who, moved by the Holy Spirit, welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith.

As you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One, help us to say our own “yes” to the urgent call, as pressing as ever, to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Filled with Christ’s presence, you brought joy to John the Baptist, making him exult in the womb of his mother. Brimming over with joy, you sang of the great things done by God.

Standing at the foot of the cross with unyielding faith, you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection, and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit so that the evangelizing Church might be born.

Obtain for us now a new ardor born of the resurrection, that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death.

Give us a holy courage to seek new paths, that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman.

Virgin of listening and contemplation, Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast, pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are, that she may never be closed in on herself or lose her passion for establishing God’s kingdom.

Star of the new evangelization, help us to bear radiant witness to communion, service, ardent and generous faith, justice and love of the poor, that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth, illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Mother of the living Gospel, wellspring of happiness for God’s little ones, pray for us. Amen. Alleluia!

For the Slides of this Talk

You may download a PDF of the PowerPoint slides of this talk and listen to the audio recording

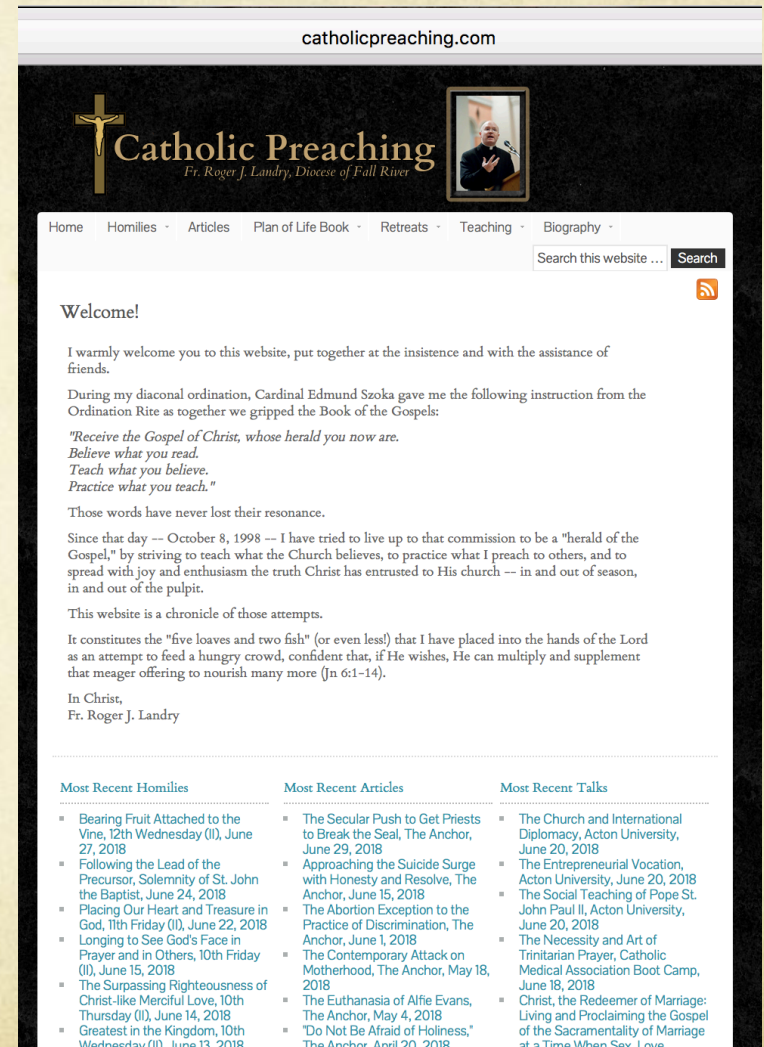
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The screenshot shows the homepage of the website catholicpreaching.com. The header features the site's logo, which includes a cross and the text "Catholic Preaching" with a subtitle "Fr. Roger J. Landry, Diocese of Fall River" and a small portrait of the priest. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Homilies, Articles, Plan of Life Book, Retreats, Teaching, and Biography. A search bar is located on the right side of the menu. The main content area begins with a "Welcome!" message from Fr. Roger J. Landry, followed by a paragraph of text and a quote from Cardinal Edmund Szoka. Below this is a section titled "Most Recent Homilies" with a list of recent talks, including "Bearing Fruit Attached to the Vine" and "Following the Lead of the Precursor". To the right of this section are two columns titled "Most Recent Articles" and "Most Recent Talks", each containing a list of recent content items.

The Heart of the New Evangelization: Meeting, Knowing and Loving Jesus Back



*Thank you very much for your attention
and for being a co-worker in the vineyard
of the New Evangelization!*