A mosaic depicting Jesus Christ in the center, flanked by two apostles, with a church building in the background. The mosaic is composed of small, colorful tiles in shades of gold, brown, red, and green. Jesus is shown with a halo, wearing a dark brown robe, and has his hands raised in a gesture of blessing or teaching. The two apostles on either side are also shown in traditional robes, with their hands raised. In the background, a church building with a dome and arched windows is visible. The overall style is characteristic of Byzantine or early medieval art.

Woe to Me
If I Do Not
Preach the Gospel:
Our Eucharistic
Apostolate

Fr. Roger J. Landry • Diocese of Toledo Pastoral Conference
September 14, 2023



Proclaiming Christ Crucified and Risen in the Eucharist

- St. Paul was filled with a holy anxiety to share the faith: “Woe to Me if I do not proclaim the Gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16).
- Over the course of his preaching, which began with salvation history, he eventually simplified to “knowing” and “preaching nothing but Christ and him crucified!” He gloried in the Cross and rejoiced, “I have been crucified with Christ and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in Christ who loved me and gave his life up for me.” This reality of a Christian’s crucified life are important to remember as we mark the Exaltation of the Cross.
- That same Christ crucified is risen from the dead in the Holy Eucharist. We are called to know him, proclaim him, be united with him so that the life we now live in the flesh we live in communion with him.



The Desire to Evangelize

- St. Paul's words about the kerygma model his words about the transmission of the Eucharist.
- For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared to Cephas, ... the Twelve, ... more than five hundred brothers at once, ... James, ... all the apostles, [and] last of all, ... to me.
- For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.
- The kerygma is not just about events of the past. The kerygma, as Pope Francis underlines, is about Christ being with us still: "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" (EG 164).



Proclaiming the Eucharistic Lord

- In the heart of the Mass, right after the words of consecration bringing Jesus' Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity to the altar, the priest says, "the Mystery of faith" and two of the three responses show the connection between our faith in Jesus' Real Presence and our sharing it:
 - "We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again."
 - "When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again."
- In the Eucharist, we proclaim Jesus' self-giving death, his giving his Body and Blood for us and our salvation. We also profess his Resurrection, that the Eucharist is Jesus' Risen Body and Blood, come to be with us until the end of time in the new modality the Resurrection makes possible.
- When we make the celebration of the Eucharist, the encounter with our Eucharistic Lord, the source, summit, root and center of our life, then we make proclaiming his new and eternal Passover and the reality of his risen presence in our life the heart of existence. We seek to pass on to others as of the first importance what we ourselves have received.
- "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16).

Proclaiming the Eucharistic Lord

- The Church normally distinguishes three different aspects of the proclamation of our faith:
 - Mission proper – Sharing the Gospel with those who have never heard of Jesus.
 - Pastoral Care of the Faithful – Helping the seeds of the Gospel sink more deeply into the good soil of those who have accepted the Gospel, have been baptized, and who are trying to grow in faith.
 - New Evangelization – Sharing the Gospel anew with those who have heard the Gospel before and been baptized, but who have drifted away from the faith or rejected it.
- In the present situation of the Church, in which even many of those who practice haven't received a profound formation, there is a substantial overlap between all three phases, in which we need to use the principles of the first proclamation to help those who have heard it before and who are even trying to live by it.
- This is true in particular with regard to proclaiming our Eucharistic faith. We can't take for granted those who are coming to Mass know what they're supposed to know.
- Today I'd like to talk about the proclamation of the Gospel under the principles of the new evangelization.



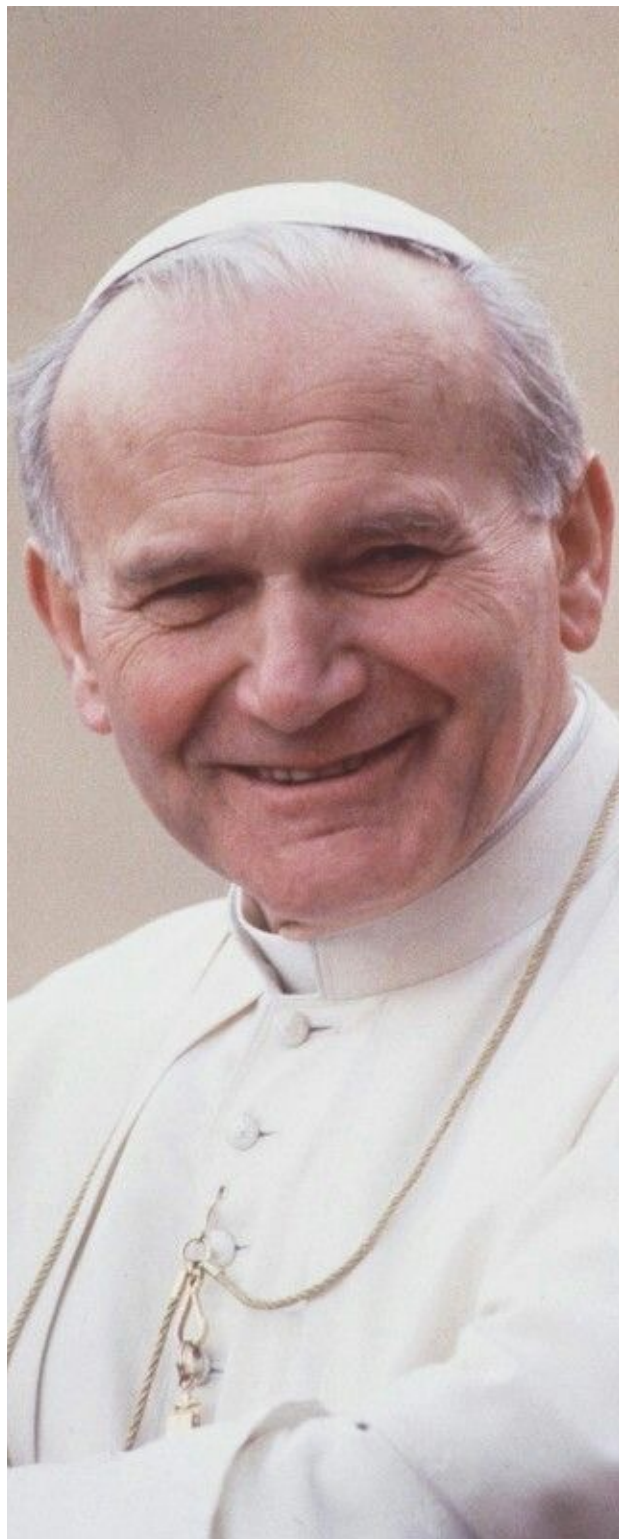
The Lord's Model of New Evangelization



- Emmaus scene
 - They're walking dejected away from Jerusalem and all it symbolizes going downhill into the darkness.
 - Jesus meets them and leads them on a liturgy of the word, helping them to see that the crucifixion wasn't a contradiction to their hopes for a Messiah but a confirmation. They were "slow of heart," not of head, but after the Liturgy of the Word, their hearts begin to burn and they hungered for Jesus to stay with them.
 - Then Jesus celebrated Mass in their home and they recognized him in the Breaking of Bread.
 - Immediately thereafter they run seven miles up hill, in darkness, to share that they have seen the Risen Lord. The Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and Christian Mission are all foreshadowed in this Gospel event.
 - Pope Francis to CELAM bishops in 2013 said that the reasons for others' departure contains the seed for their return. He also asked, challengingly, whether we still have the capacity to warm hearts.

The Eucharistic Dimension of the Church's Proclamation

- John Paul II – *Stay with Us, Lord*
 - “Once we have truly met the Risen One by partaking of his body and blood, we cannot keep to ourselves the joy we have experienced. The encounter with Christ, constantly intensified and deepened in the Eucharist, issues in the Church and in every Christian *an urgent summons to testimony and evangelization.*”
 - “Entering into communion with Christ in the memorial of his Pasch also means sensing the duty to be a missionary of the event made present in that rite.”
 - “The dismissal at the end of each Mass is *a charge* given to Christians, inviting them to work for the spread of the Gospel and the imbuing of society with Christian values.”
 - “The Eucharist not only provides the interior strength needed for this mission but is also – in some sense – *its plan*. For the Eucharist is a *mode of being*, which passes from Jesus into each Christian, through whose testimony it is meant to spread throughout society and culture.”





The Eucharistic Apostolate

Blessed Carlo Acutis

- Blessed Carlo Acutis (1991-2016) is the first millennial to be raised to the altars. He is the second co-patron of the Eucharistic Revival.
- After receiving his first Communion at 7, he became thereafter a daily Mass goer until he died of acute promyelocytic leukemia at 15.
- When he would receive Holy Communion, he'd pray in thanksgiving: "Jesus, come right in! Make yourself at home!"
- At the age of 11, he learned computer programming to build websites to catalogue and promote Eucharistic miracles after learning how effective they were in persuading his friends to come to Mass and adoration. He researched and wrote about them until they grew to a 196-part series. In 2005 it was exhibited in the Vatican during a conference on Eucharistic miracles during the Year of the Eucharist. It now continues to travel the world.



The Eucharistic Apostolate

Blessed Carlo Acutis

- “I think that many people do not fully understand the value of the Mass, because if they recognized the enormous blessing we have in a Lord who gives himself as our food and drink in the Sacred Host, they would go to Mass every day to participate in the fruits of the sacrifice and let go of so many superfluous things.”
- “The more often we receive the Eucharist, the more we become like Jesus”
- In a “Holiness kit” he made for the students he taught in catechism, he wrote: “Try to go every day to Mass and to receive Holy Communion. ... If you can, stay a few minutes every day in Eucharistic adoration in front of the tabernacle where Jesus is really present, and you will see your level of holiness increase considerably.”
- “The Eucharist is my highway to heaven.”



Magisterial Inspiration about Preaching the Eucharist

- SC 84. “There is nothing more beautiful than to know [Jesus] and to speak to others of our friendship with him. These words are all the more significant if we think of the mystery of the Eucharist. The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church. We too must be able to tell our brothers and sisters with conviction: "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us" (1 Jn 1:3). Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make him known to others.
- SC 84. “The institution of the Eucharist, for that matter, anticipates the very heart of Jesus' mission: he is the one sent by the Father for the redemption of the world (cf. Jn 3:16-17; Rom 8:32). At the Last Supper, Jesus entrusts to his disciples the sacrament which makes present his self-sacrifice for the salvation of us all, in obedience to the Father's will. We cannot approach the eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission that, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people. Missionary outreach is thus an essential part of the eucharistic form of the Christian life.”

Magisterial Inspiration about Preaching the Eucharist



- SC 85. The first and fundamental mission that we receive from the sacred mysteries we celebrate is that of **bearing witness by our lives**. The wonder we experience at the gift God has made to us in Christ gives new impulse to our lives and **commits us to becoming witnesses of his love**. **We become witnesses when, through our actions, words and way of being, Another makes himself present**. Witness could be described as the means by which the truth of God's love comes to men and women in history, inviting them to accept freely this radical newness. ... Even if the test of martyrdom [ultimate witness] is not asked of us, we know that worship pleasing to God demands that we should be inwardly prepared for it. **Such worship culminates in the joyful and convincing testimony of a consistent Christian life, wherever the Lord calls us to be his witnesses.**”
- SC 86. Emphasis on the intrinsic relationship between the Eucharist and mission also leads to a rediscovery of the ultimate content of our proclamation. **The more ardent the love for the Eucharist in the hearts of the Christian people, the more clearly will they recognize the goal of all mission: *to bring Christ to others***. Not just a theory or a way of life inspired by Christ, but **the gift of his very person**. Anyone who has not shared the truth of love with his brothers and sisters has not yet given enough. ... The mystery of the Eucharist, believed in and celebrated, demands a constant catechesis on the need for all to engage in a missionary effort centered on the proclamation of Jesus as the one Savior.



Magisterial Inspiration about Preaching the Eucharist

- St. John Paul II:
 - EE 21. The celebration of the Eucharist is at the center of the process of the Church's growth.
 - EE 22. By its union with Christ, the People of the New Covenant, far from closing in upon itself, *becomes a “sacrament” for humanity*, a sign and instrument of the salvation achieved by Christ, the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. Mt 5:13-16), for the redemption of all. The Church's mission stands in continuity with the mission of Christ: “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (Jn 20:21). From the perpetuation of the sacrifice of the Cross and her communion with the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, the Church draws the spiritual power needed to carry out her mission. **The Eucharist thus appears as both the source and the summit of all evangelization**, since its goal is the communion of mankind with Christ and in him with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Lessons from the Parable of the Sower and the Seed

- To learn how to proclaim the gift of the Eucharist effectively, we can examine what Jesus teaches in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed.
- The Seed – The Eucharistic Jesus and the Church's Eucharistic knowledge, faith, amazement, love, and life.
- The Soil
 - Hardened soil by the path, stubborn, resistant, either because of opposition or entrenched habit.
 - Superficial rocky soil, initially responsive but gets torched whenever the heat and spotlight gets turned up and suffering ensues.
 - Thorny soil, in which worldly cares and anxieties, the lure of riches and pleasure choke the growth of the seed.
 - Good soil, which bears 30, 60 or 100-fold fruit.



Lessons from the Parable of the Sower and the Seed

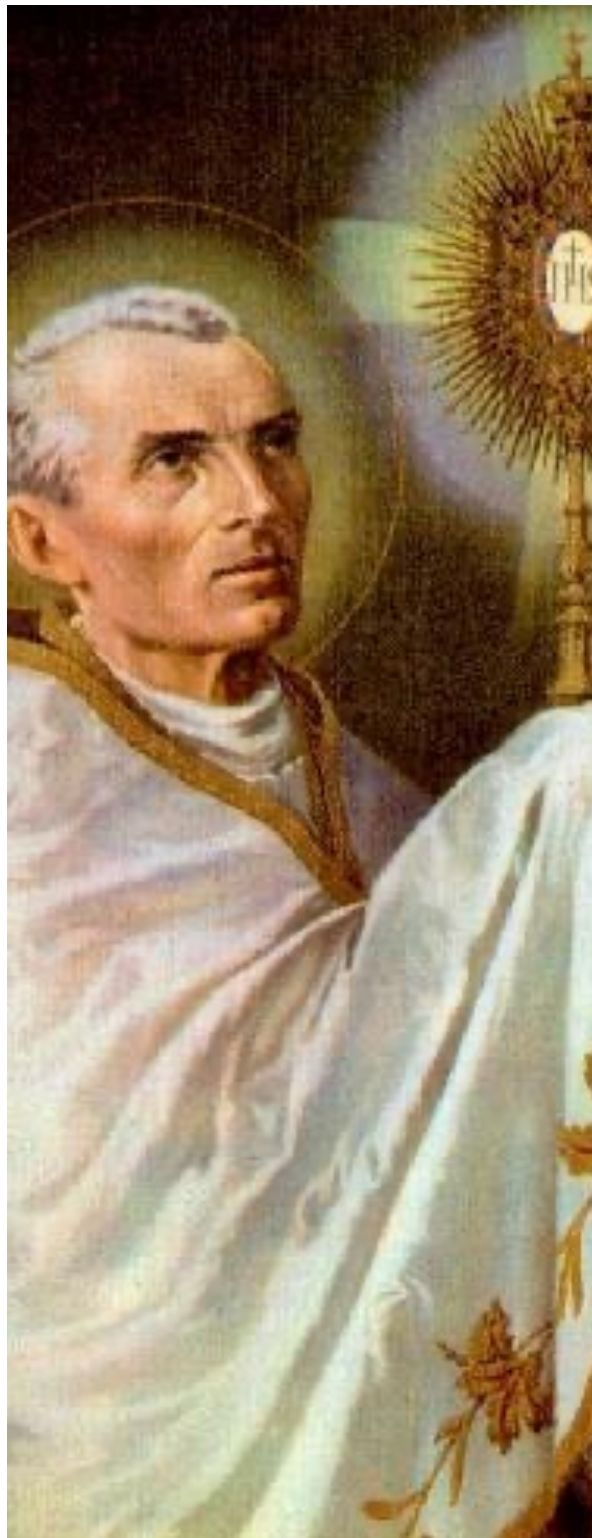
- As we look out at the field today and take a soil sample, we learn:
 - Secularism, living as if God doesn't exist, which can lead to stubbornness.
 - Emotivism, which focuses almost exclusively on how things make us feel, making us superficial.
 - Lots of thorns, other priorities or concerns that get in the way.



Lessons from the Parable of the Sower and the Seed

- What needs to be sown and passed on?
 - **The sacrificial nature of the Mass:** how we enter in time into Jesus' eternal sacrifice on Calvary. The Mass is not just a Sunday spiritual get-together.
 - **The doctrine of transubstantiation,** that after the consecration by a validly ordained priest, what started out as bread and wine because really, truly, substantially the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. This involves the miracle of the maintenance of the accidents.
 - **The Real Presence.** Jesus is present as long as the species of the Eucharist remain, on the altar, in our tabernacles, within us.
 - That the “res” of the Eucharist is to make us one with him and with each other, one body and one Spirit in Christ. The Eucharist builds up the Church as his Body and Bride.
 - The need to **share our faith** in the Eucharistic Lord with others.





The Eucharistic Preaching of Saint Peter Julian Eymard

- “The Eucharist is everything, because from the Eucharist, everything is.”
- “Receive Communion often, and Jesus will change you into himself.”
- “Attend Mass daily; it will prosper the whole day. All your duties will be performed better and your soul will be stronger to bear its daily cross. The Mass is the most holy act of religion; you can do nothing that can give greater glory to God or be more profitable for your soul than to attend Mass frequently and devoutly. It is the favorite devotion of the saints.”
- “Be the apostle of the divine Eucharist, like a flame which enlightens and warms, like the Angel of his heart who will go to proclaim him to those who don't know him and will encourage those who love him and are suffering.”

The Eucharistic Preaching of Saint Manuel Gonzalez Garcia

- “A Mass celebrated ... by the simplest of priests in his poor dilapidated church is worth as much as the whole Gospel, as Jesus with his teaching, his works, his pains and death.”
- “If I make the Mass ever more my own, incorporating myself into the Sacrifice of Jesus, then not only do I celebrate the Mass but also I become the Mass.”
- His bones continue to preach still, buried beneath the tabernacle in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of the Cathedral of Palencia, Spain: “There is Jesus! There he is! Do not leave him abandoned!”





The Eucharistic Preaching of Saint John Vianney

- His pastoral strategy for the holiness of his parishioners was totally Eucharistic and involved five steps. He sought to help those entrusted to him in Ars and in the confessional grasp and live:
 - The importance of the Lord's day.
 - What the Sacrifice of the Mass really is.
 - The Real Presence of Jesus.
 - The importance of frequent communion.
 - Eucharistic charity, receiving others like one receives the Lord.

Sharing Our Eucharistic Faith in Eucharistic Processions

- Eucharistic processions are an important part of that Eucharistic apostolate, because through them we give bold and unambiguous testimony that we know that what we are carrying in the monstrance is not a piece of bread, but the Living Bread come down from Heaven, who has given us his Body and Blood for the life of the world (Jn 6:51).
- In Eucharistic processions, we take Jesus Christ out into the world he redeemed. By our joyful witness, devout prayers, and enthusiastic singing, we proclaim Him to be really, truly and substantially among us. And we invite others to join us in following him who is the Way.
- The Church's pilgrimage through time is ultimately a Eucharistic procession!





Concluding Thoughts

- The purpose of the Church's preaching and pastoral work is ultimately to make "evangelized evangelizers," to form the faithful so that they might be equipped to share the faith with credibility.
- In the context of the Eucharistic Revival, it's meant to help the faithful draw their life from Jesus in the Eucharist, so that by their very life — their virtues, prayer, family life, concern for others, work and study — they might draw others to the source, summit, root and center of their existence.
- It's to draw them from the Eucharistic encounter with Christ, to conversion and newness of life, to discipleship, to communion and to mission.
- The same Holy Spirit who came down upon Philip and James, Mary and the other apostles in the Upper Room has been given to us so that, with Him, we may give joint witness to the reality that God-with-us is still with us Eucharistically until the end of time.
- So with courage, we put out into the deep anew!



Leader's Playbook

YEAR OF PARISH REVIVAL

JUNE 2023 – JUNE 2024

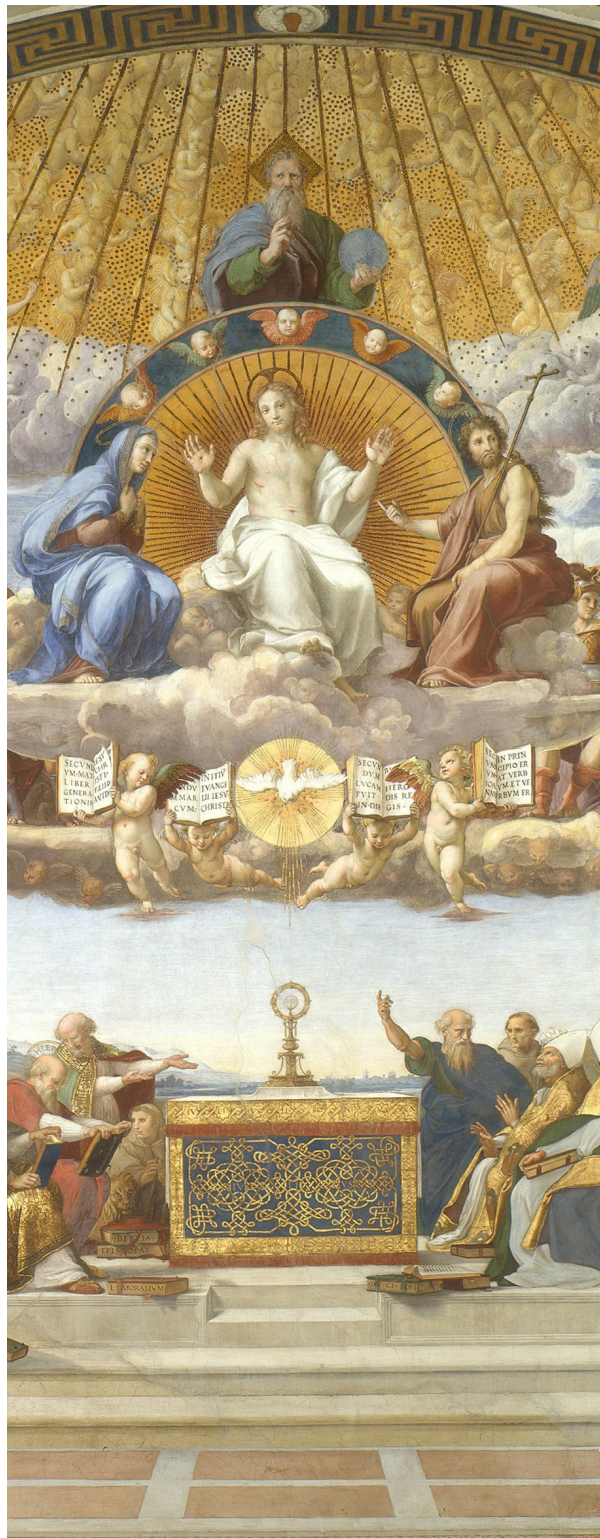


Resources for the Revival

- Please sign up for the weekly newsletter for the Revival: eucharisticrevival.org
- Download from there a copy of the Year of Parish Revival Leader's Playbook, with ideas for reinvigorating Sunday worship, helping people encounter Jesus personally in nights of adoration, resources for strengthening faith formation about Jesus and the Eucharist in small groups and preaching, and tips to invite others back one at a time and accompany them.
- Think about coming, with your fellow parishioners, to the National Eucharistic Congress July 17-21, 2024 in Indianapolis.

Discussion Questions

- Who have been the people in my life who have helped me come to know, love and adore Jesus in the Holy Eucharist? What did they do effectively to pass on to me the Church's gratitude and amazement? What from their Eucharistic apostolate with me can I use to draw others?
- Basing himself of Jesus' interaction with the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, Pope Francis has said that the reasons why people leave contains the seeds for their return. What are the reasons why the majority of Catholics no longer frequent the Mass and avail themselves of the supreme gift of Jesus in the Eucharist? What are the "seeds" that those reasons contain that should be part of our approach to invite them back?
- Blessed Carlo Acutis attracted his young peers to the Eucharist through sharing with them various stories of the Eucharistic miracles. Would using science and wonder like he did would work with those I know who have fallen away from the regular practice of the faith? How can we lead them from the "miracles" to the great miracle of what Jesus does in the Eucharist?
- What do I think are the biggest obstacles to the transmission of the Church's grateful love of Jesus in the Eucharist to the younger generations?





Welcome!

I warmly welcome you to this website, put together at the insistence and with the assistance of friends.

During my diaconal ordination, Cardinal Edmund Szoka gave me the following instruction from the Ordination Rite as together we gripped the Book of the Gospels:

*"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are.
Believe what you read.
Teach what you believe.
Practice what you teach."*

Those words have never lost their resonance.

Since that day -- October 8, 1998 -- I have tried to live up to that commission to be a "herald of the Gospel," by striving to teach what the Church believes, to practice what I preach to others, and to spread with joy and enthusiasm the truth Christ has entrusted to His church -- in and out of season, in and out of the pulpit.

This website is a chronicle of those attempts. You may also follow postings of articles, homilies and teachings on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube.

You can also subscribe to the podcast of daily homilies, lectures and talks through Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts.

It constitutes the "five loaves and two fish" (or even less!) that I have placed into the hands of the Lord as an attempt to feed a hungry crowd, confident that, if He wishes, He can multiply and supplement that meager offering to nourish many more (Jn 6:1-14).

In Christ,
Fr. Roger J. Landry



Most Recent Homilies

God's Comfort and the Conversion Required to Receive It, Second Sunday of Advent (B), December 6, 2020

Accepting, Following and Announcing Jesus without Offense, Second Sunday of Advent (EF), December 6, 2020

Walking the Way of the Kingdom Jesus Indicates, First Saturday of Advent, December 5, 2020

Running to Meet Our Light, Strength and Salvation, First Friday of Advent, December 4, 2020

Listening to and Acting on the Long Awaited One's Words, First Thursday of Advent, December 3, 2020

Going Hungry to Meet Christ in a Three-Fold Banquet, First Wednesday of Advent, December 2, 2020

Childlike Eyes to See, First Tuesday of Advent, December 1, 2020

Singing the Song of the Lamb, 34th Wednesday (II), November 25, 2020

Turning to the Lord Who Comes to Judge the Earth, 34th Tuesday (II), November 24, 2020

Following the King and Lamb Wherever He Goes, 34th Monday (II), November 23, 2020

Most Recent Articles

Our Duty and Salvation, The Anchor, November 27, 2020

Living the Reality of the Kingdom of Christ, National Catholic Register, November 19, 2020

The Knights Our Age Needs, The Anchor, November 13, 2020

Remembering Andrew Walther, November 7, 2020

Just a Parish Priest, The Anchor, October 30, 2020

Coming to Know the Original Three-Dimensional Carlo Acutis, The Anchor, October 16, 2020

A Good Shepherd Full of Christian and Priestly Virtues, The Pilot, October 5, 2020

Returning to the Sacrament of Divine Love, The Anchor, September 18, 2020

The Pastoral Malpractice of Liturgical Abuse, The Anchor, September 4, 2020

The Chosen, The Anchor, August 21, 2020

Most Recent Talks

Receiving the Lord Jesus as Mary and Joseph, Advent Day of Recollection for the Leonine Forum, December 5, 2020

Novena in Preparation for the Immaculate Conception, Leonine Forum, November 28 to December 8, 2020

Blessed Michael McGivney and the Call to Holiness, McGivney Festival Young Adult Prayer Vigil, October 31, 2020

Apprenticeship in the Art of Living, Duc in Altum Virtual Schools Summit, October 28-30, 2020

Preaching on Marital Love and Accompanying Couples toward the Full Embrace of the Church's Teaching, Diocese of Gary Clergy Convocation, October 20, 2020

The Divorced and Remarried, Challenges and Triumphs in Pastoral Care, Diocese of Gary Clergy Convocation, October 20, 2020

The Heart of the New Evangelization: Meeting, Knowing and Loving Jesus Back, New Zealand Evangelion's In his Name Virtual Conference, October 10-11, 2020

Christian Anthropology: The Human Person in the Modern World, Leonine Forum Opening Lecture, October 8, 2020

Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching, UNSRC Catholic Club, August 27, 2020

Making Better Confessions, Catholic Information Conference, July 24, 2020

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