



# EVANGELIZATION

One of the prayers of the Mass in the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary expresses a beautiful aspiration: "In our mortal flesh may we show forth the life of Jesus." This simple hope expresses succinctly the nature and purpose of evangelization.

Through the urgency of the Great Commission and the power of Baptism, each Christian is sent forth to proclaim the saving Gospel of Christ, so that every person created by God comes to salvation by knowing, loving, and serving Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The task of evangelizing has three concentric circles of influence: Catholics already engaged in the life and mission of the Church, Catholics who are not, and the wider community. We ourselves must allow the Lord to stir the Holy Spirit into flame within us and to deepen our sacrificial love, so that we can help lead and equip our people to reach the disengaged, the lost, and the seeking. We cannot give what we do not possess ourselves.

The witness of a holy life totally consecrated to Christ is the primary evangelizing tool. The building blocks of sanctity include regular and fervent participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, Scripture study, daily prayer, joyful asceticism, and generous loving service of our neighbor. As we more profoundly discover the depths of God's loving mercy, the truth of the Gospel, and the urgency of the evangelizing task, we are compelled to share with everyone the fullness of life in Christ which we have come to know as the true meaning and purpose of our existence.

Our evangelizing initiative is not another program or a three-year cycle of activity or just another thing to do. God is inviting us in this moment, rich in opportunity and challenge, to focus our energies, talents, and resources on the mission of the Church with renewed vigor. To proclaim the Gospel to every creature, to show forth the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh, to manifest the Catholic Faith as intelligible, credible, liberating and saving. Having received this new and glorious life in the risen Christ, we just have to share Him with everybody!

## A NOTE FROM BISHOP HYING

“

**NO BELIEVER IN CHRIST  
CAN AVOID THIS SUPREME  
DUTY: TO PROCLAIM  
CHRIST TO ALL PEOPLES.  
- POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II**

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## YEARLY FORMATION NEWSLETTER TOPICS

### EASTER 2020

The Paschal Mystery

### JUNE 2020

Evangelization

### JULY 2020

Discipleship

### AUGUST 2020

Baptism and Confirmation

### SEPTEMBER 2020

Reclaiming Sunday

### OCTOBER 2020

Interior Life: Prayer

### NOVEMBER 2020

Interior Life: Mortification

### DECEMBER 2020

Confession

### JANUARY 2021

Goodness

### FEBRUARY 2021

Beauty

### MARCH 2021

Truth

### APRIL 2021

New Methods

## EVANGELIZATION

DR. JOHN P. JOY

How important is evangelization? Well, how important is eternal salvation? We know evangelization is important to God, for he has told us that he “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”[1] And so the mission he entrusted to his followers was to “go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation.”[2] Why? Because the eternal salvation of souls literally depends on it.

One of the most poisonous heresies of our time is the idea that most people, maybe even everyone, goes to heaven basically just by being nice, regardless of their beliefs about God. An idea like that absolutely cripples any real efforts at evangelization. It’s pretty hard to be enthusiastic about proclaiming the Gospel if you don’t really think people need to believe it.

But the truth is that not everyone goes to heaven. There are two paths and two outcomes: the way of salvation through faith as a disciple of Jesus Christ, which leads to eternal joy with God in heaven, and the way of perdition, which leads to eternal suffering in hell. Jesus himself said it: “the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many; the gate

is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”[3]

Evangelization is a requirement of love. Genuine love means willing the good of others, especially their ultimate good, which is eternal life with God. But faith in Jesus Christ is necessary in order to obtain that good. As the Catechism teaches: “Believing in Jesus Christ and in the One who sent him for our salvation is necessary for obtaining that salvation.”[4] Jesus himself taught the same thing: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”[5]

Of course it is true, as Vatican II reminds us, that “in ways known to himself, God can lead those who, through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel, **to that faith** without which it is impossible to please him” (Thomas Aquinas speculates that God could send an angel or a private revelation to lead such a person to faith in Jesus), “yet the Church still has the obligation . . . to evangelize all men.”[6] Why? Because although miraculous private revelations are always possible, they seem to be pretty rare. It’s much more likely that God will send you or me to preach the Gospel, and we have to answer the call.

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[1] 1 Tim 2:4

[2] Mark 16:15

[3] Matt 7:13–14

[4] CCC 161

[5] Mark 16:16

[6] CCC 848

## FURTHER STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

### DOCUMENTS

- [Pope Paul VI, Evangelization in the Modern World](#)
- [USCCB, Disciples Called to Witness](#)

### PROGRAMS

- [The 99, a New System for Evangelization \(Ascension\)](#)
- [Lectio: Evangelization \(Formed\)](#)
- [Return: How to Draw Your Child Back to the Church \(Brandon Vogt\)](#)

### BOOKS

- [Evangelizing Catholics \(Scott Hahn\)](#)
- [The Contagious Catholic \(Marcel LeJeune\)](#)
- [A Beginner's Guide To Missionary Discipleship \(free e-book\)](#)

### VIDEOS

- [USCCB, Outreach to the Unaffiliated \(Bishop Barron\)](#)
- [Evangelization: Telling the Story of God's Love \(Fr. Mike Schmitz\)](#)

## TIPS FOR PARISH LEADERSHIP

An essential part of this formation phase is building a healthy culture in our parish and school leadership groups and teams. The [Amazing Parish](#) has put together a sheet of [Exercises for Building Healthy Culture](#) - a culture of prayer, teamwork, and active discipleship. If you are in a position of leadership of any kind, these exercises will help you build healthy culture for your team.

Parish and school leadership groups should be meeting at least monthly, whether in person or online: priest with parish staff (including principal), principal with school teachers and staff, priest with pastoral and finance councils, and DREs/YMs with catechists and volunteers.

**Choose at least one of the recommended resources on the left to watch or study together as a team.** We recommend starting with the 25 min video from the USCCB about Outreach to the Unaffiliated.

## FORMATION IN THE PARISH

### QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Why are you passionate about the work of evangelization and making the gospel known in the world?
- What keeps you from evangelizing and sharing the joy you find in your Catholic faith?
- Who in your life could you do a better job at sharing the Gospel with? Pray for the graces to be a good witness in both word and action.
- How can you better use the current pandemic to speak words of life and hope in the midst of your evangelical efforts?

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

- What could give greater life to our evangelical efforts in our personal apostolate and in the work of our parish?
- Who in our parish does a great job of proclaiming the Gospel? How so?
- What can we do to focus in more intently on centering all activity in the parish around the work of evangelization?
- How can we pray for each other to be more zealous, joyful evangelists?

# TIMELINE UPDATES AND ACTION ITEMS

## PHASE ONE

LEADERSHIP FORMATION | Begins Pentecost 2020

- Read and discuss Bishop's Pentecost letter.
- This summer, pastors and the parish Evangelization Lead will begin to invite staff and/or parishioners to join your Evangelization Team. Your Diocesan Evangelization Mentor can help guide you through this.
- Take advantage NOW of 3 months FREE training courses for your parish staff and leaders at [Revive Parishes](#). Start with the course on [missionary discipleship](#), and then we would recommend the course on [evangelization](#). Browse the other [courses available](#) and ask other key leaders in your parish or school to take the course most applicable to them.

## PHASE TWO

SEEKING HOLINESS | Begins Advent 2020

Beginning Advent 2020, the Bishop is asking every parish to make concerted efforts to help all members of their community to do four things: (1) re-claim Sunday as the Lord's day; (2) pray 15 minutes every day, especially with Scripture; (3) observe Fridays as days of penance throughout the year; (4) make a monthly confession.

Reflect on your own fidelity to these basic Catholic practices and start thinking about how they could be cultivated more effectively in your own parish and/or school.

## PHASE THREE

CREATING PARISH PLANS | Pentecost 2021 - Advent 2021

## PHASE FOUR

IMPLEMENTING PARISH PLANS | Begins Advent 2021

## HOW CAN THE DIOCESE HELP?

### YOUR DIOCESAN PARISH “EVANGELIZATION MENTOR”

One of the **major ways** that the Diocese will assist parishes from the beginning of Phase One is by providing each parish a chancery staff member to serve as a parish Evangelization Mentor, who will meet monthly with pastors and Evangelization Leads. The Diocesan Mentors are all committed to the work of evangelization in their own lives and strive to live the call to share the Gospel message.

Having an in depth knowledge of this process, they will serve as a resource and support that will assist the pastor and Evangelization Lead through the coming years. They will build relationships with each parish and help to trouble shoot as struggles come up in the journey, while encouraging the parish in their individual plans. Finally, the Mentor has access to the Bishop on a regular basis and will serve as a source of communication between the parish and the Bishop.

Diocesan Mentors will also be working with priests and leaders within parishes by vicariate to network and offer vicariate level collaboration for all parishes to make opportunities available to all parishes.

### BISHOP'S VIDEOS

Along with the content in this newsletter, stay tuned to the Diocesan YouTube channel for complementary videos from Bishop Hying.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### ON THE WEB:

[WWW.MADISONDIOCESE.ORG/GMD](http://WWW.MADISONDIOCESE.ORG/GMD)

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**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
PREACHING, 1655**

MATTIA PRETI

When I think of preaching with a sense of urgency, I think of John the Baptist. And for me this painting really captures the spirit of his preaching. You can see his intensity coming through in his posture — leaning over the trunk of a tree, as if eagerly straining forward to announce the Good News of the coming of the Messiah. But at the same time his face is full of gentleness and compassion. With his finger he points to Jesus Christ, the Savior of Israel, whose sandals he is not worthy to untie. And the banner on his staff carries his immortal words, *Behold the Lamb of God!* That is evangelization. Our task as missionary disciples is simply to point to the person of Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, so that all those we meet might have the chance to encounter him in a truly life-changing way: *Behold the Lamb of God, see how much he loved you! See how he offered his life as a sacrifice for YOU, so that you might be freed from your bondage to sin and from eternal death. He gave his life for us, let us also give our lives to him!*