

Women of Faith for the New Evangelization

- Introduction
 - Today the Church in the US celebrates the Memorial of St. Mother Theodore Guerin, the foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary of the Woods, canonized seven years ago this month by Pope Benedict. When she was a young sister, she was infected with smallpox and nearly died. The illness destroyed her digestive system and she suffered consequence for the rest of her life. When in 1839 Bishop Célestine de la Hailandière of Vincennes, Indiana, asked the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir to which she pertained to send a group of sisters as missionaries to open up Catholic schools and universities in Indiana, she was asked if she would go. Even though she knew of her health problems not to mention her own concerns with whether she would have the many talents a missionary needs, she agreed, saying she took seriously a sentence in her Congregation's Rule, "to work with zeal for the sanctification of souls [and] be disposed to go to whatsoever part of the world obedience calls them." By the time of her death 17 years later, she had founded a new order, opened scores of schools and experienced great growth in her order.
 - Blessed John Paul II said at her beatification in 1998, "Today she continues to teach Christians to abandon themselves to the providence of our heavenly Father and to be totally committed to doing what pleases him. The life of Bl. Theodore Guérin is a testimony that everything is possible with God and for God." Pope Benedict added at her canonization eight years later, "Mother Théodore Guérin is a beautiful spiritual figure and a model of the Christian life. She was always open for the missions the Church entrusted to her, and she found the strength and the boldness to put them [the missions] into practice in the Eucharist, in prayer and in an infinite trust in Divine Providence."
 - Her story is a fitting introduction to this conference on Women of Faith for the New Evangelization. She shows us the trust in God, the zeal for souls and the apostolic audacity that the Popes have been summoning all members of the church to have for the new Evangelization.
 - What I'd like to do in this conference is to give a very quick sketch of the teaching of the Church on the New Evangelization — what it is, what are its method, content, agents and audiences. Then I'd like to focus on the New Evangelization in the thought of Pope Francis. I do it in this order because when I was Rome for the conclave this March, preparing to do color commentary for EWTN, one of my colleagues, Robert Royal, provocatively suggested that we didn't need another teaching pope like John Paul II or Benedict XVI, but rather a Pope who would en flesh their teachings and the documents of the Second Vatican Council and show us all how to live by them. All of the members of our team had a spirited conversation about that suggestion, but it's clear that that's the Pope the Holy Spirit has given us, who would lead by example in putting the teaching of the Church into practice. And so after examining the teachings of the last few popes on the New Evangelization, we'll examine how Pope Francis is seeking to lead us all to put that treasure trove into action.
 - What is the new evangelization?
 - The new evangelization is distinguished from two other aspects of the Church's mission: what we call the "missio ad gentes," proclaiming the Gospel to those individuals and nations who have never had the Gospel proposed to them; and the pastoral care of the faithful, which is the regular help the Church gives to those who are practicing the faith to help their faith grow. The New Evangelization is specifically the outreach to those who have been baptized who have ceased to live the Christian life in large part or altogether. It's the reproposal of the Gospel to those who, in many cases, have given up the practice of Christianity and, because of the influence of secularism, are indifferent to faith and are living "as if God did not exist." But, as Pope Benedict and many synod fathers noted over the course of last October's Synod on the New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Faith, these distinctions are starting to get

blended in our present world and hence the new evangelization is coming to be the new and timely proposal of Christ to all three groups.

- In 2000, in a great talk on the New Evangelization at the Jubilee for Catechists, Cardinal Ratzinger got to the root causes of this phenomenon: “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 searching for, along with 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 ‘classic’ evangelization. Everyone needs the Gospel; the Gospel is destined to all and not only to a specific circle and this is why we are obliged to look for new ways of bringing the Gospel to all.
- He went on: “At the beginning of His public life Jesus says: I have come to evangelize the poor (Lk 4:18); this means: I have the response to your fundamental question; I will show you the path of life, the path towards happiness – rather: I am that path.” He responds to the deepest poverty, which is the “tediousness of a life considered absurd and contradictory,” a life without joy that produces the inability to love, produces jealousy, avarice, and other destructive responses to the lack of meaning. “This is why we are in need of a new evangelization: if the art of living remains and unknown, nothing else works.”
- The New Evangelization is to teach the art of living to all those wandering in the desert.
- So the new Evangelization is:
 - “the courage to forge new paths in responding to the changing circumstances and conditions facing the Church in her call to proclaim and live the Gospel today (lineamenta)
 - IL 88: the name given to a spiritual reawakening and the reanimation of a process of conversion which the Church asks of herself, all her communities and all the baptized.
 - It points to the “renewed spiritual efforts in the life of faith within the local Churches, starting with a process to discern the changes in various cultural and social settings and their impact on Christian life, to reread the memory of faith and to undertake new responsibilities and generate new energies to joyously and convincingly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” (lineamenta)
- Method of the New Evangelization
 - JP II, in 1992 in the Dominican Republic, called for a commitment to evangelization “new in its ardor, methods and expression.”
 - When many in the Church think about the method of the new evangelization, their thoughts immediately go to Facebook and Twitter, to high definition videos on state-of-the-art webpages, to rock music accompanied by Christian lyrics, to teaching kids all types of hand gestures and other calisthenics to use at Mass, and other techniques. But while some of these things certainly can and in some cases should be employed by the Church in the proclamation of the Gospel today, they’re not what John Paul II was referring to when he talked about a “new” method.
 - In Greek, there are two words for new.
 - One means chronologically new, or what we’d say, “brand new.” Something that was just created, that didn’t exist before.
 - The second one means “fresh” or “renewed” or “new and improved.”
 - In the “new” evangelization, there are going to be some “brand new” elements in it — as we’ll be talking about in the conference on technology in the new evangelization — but principally the “new method” involves a “new and improved” or “renewed” approach to the basic elements that made the first evangelization so successful.
 - What are those elements?
 - First is prayer
 - Ratzinger: “Words and the whole art of communication cannot reach the human person to such depths as the Gospel must reach. ... “Jesus preached by day, by night He prayed”. ... Jesus had to acquire the disciples from God. The same is always true. We ourselves cannot gather men. We must acquire them by God for God. All methods are empty without the foundation of prayer. The word of the

announcement must always be drenched in an intense life of prayer.

- Second is witness
 - RM 42: “People today put more trust in witnesses than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission:
 - The first form of witness is the very life of the missionary, of the Christian family, and of the ecclesial community, which reveal a new way of living. The missionary who, despite all his or her human limitations and defects, lives a simple life, taking Christ as the model, is a sign of God and of transcendent realities. But everyone in the Church, striving to imitate the Divine Master, can and must bear this kind of witness; in many cases it is the only possible way of being a missionary.
 - The evangelical witness which the world finds most appealing is that of concern for people, and of charity toward the poor, the weak and those who suffer. The complete generosity underlying this attitude and these actions stands in marked contrast to human selfishness. It raises precise questions that lead to God and to the Gospel. A commitment to peace, justice, human rights and human promotion is also a witness to the Gospel when it is a sign of concern for persons and is directed toward integral human development.
 - Pope Paul VI wrote in EN 21:
 - “Above all the Gospel must be proclaimed by witness. Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who, in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the efforts of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and their hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine. Through this wordless witness these Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our midst? Such a witness is already a silent proclamation of the Good News and a very powerful and effective one. Here we have an initial act of evangelization. The above questions will ask, whether they are people to whom Christ has never been proclaimed, or baptized people who do not practice, or people who live as nominal Christians but according to principles that are in no way Christian, or people who are seeking, and not without suffering, something or someone whom they sense but cannot name. Other questions will arise, deeper and more demanding ones, questions evoked by this witness which involves presence, sharing, solidarity, and which is an essential element, and generally the first one, in evangelization. All Christians are called to this witness, and in this way they can be real evangelizers.”
 - For this witness to be effective, it must be full of joy:
 - Lineamenta: 25. “The obstacles to the new evangelization are precisely a lack of joy and hope among people, caused and spread by various situations in our world today. ... [The New Evangelization will come] not from evangelizers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervor, who have first received the joy of Christ, and who are willing to risk their lives so that the Kingdom may be proclaimed and the Church established in the midst of the world

- Third is preaching and teaching proper
 - Can't just be witness alone
 - RM 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, center 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." All forms of missionary activity are directed to this proclamation, which reveals and gives access to the mystery hidden for ages and made known in Christ (cf. Eph 3:3-9; Col 1:25-29), the mystery which lies at the heart of the Church's mission and life, as the hinge on which all evangelization turns.
 - Not just kerygma (proclamation) but theological reflection
 - CTH: "Evangelization is not only the Church's living teaching, the first proclamation of the faith (*kerygma*) and instruction, formation in the faith (catechesis); it is also the entire *wide-ranging commitment to reflect on revealed truth*, a commitment which has been expressed from the very beginning in the *works of the Fathers* in the East and in the West.... Evangelization was, in particular, the driving force of the various councils. ... The ecumenical councils ... sprang from the need to express the truth of the revealed faith in *meaningful and convincing language* to people living in a Greek world."
- Fourth is friendship
 - EN 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? It must not happen that the pressing need to proclaim the Good News to the multitudes should cause us to forget this form of proclamation whereby an individual's personal conscience is reached and touched by an entirely unique world that he receives from someone else."
 - Paul VI singles out the sacrament of penance. "We can never sufficiently praise those priests who through the sacrament of Penance or through pastoral dialogue show their readiness to guide people in the ways of the Gospel, to support them in their efforts, to raise them up if they have fallen, and always to assist them with discernment and availability." This was a major theme of the Synod that just concluded.
 - Synod Proposition 33: The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is the privileged place to receive God's mercy and forgiveness. It is a place for both personal and communal healing. In this sacrament, all the baptized have a new and personal encounter with Jesus Christ, as well as a new encounter with the Church, facilitating a full reconciliation through the forgiveness of sins. Here the penitent encounters Jesus, and at the same time he or she experiences a deeper appreciation of himself and herself. The Synod Fathers ask that this sacrament be put again at the center of the pastoral activity of the Church. In every diocese, at least one place should be especially dedicated in a permanent way for the celebration of this sacrament, where priests are always present, allowing God's mercy to be experienced by all the faithful. The sacrament should be especially available, even on a daily basis, at places of pilgrimage and specially designated

churches. Fidelity to the specific norms which rule the administration of this sacrament is necessary. Every priest should consider the Sacrament of Penance an essential part of his ministry and of the New Evangelization, and in every parish community a suitable time should be set apart for hearing confessions.

- Fifth is through an authentic missionary spirituality
 - RM 87-90: “Missionary activity demands a specific spirituality, which applies in particular to all those whom God has called to be missionaries.” It expresses five elements:
 - Complete docility to the Spirit.
 - Synod Proposition on the Sacrament of Confirmation (37). All the Christian faithful are entrusted with the mission to evangelize, due to the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Here the faithful are sealed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit and are called to participate in the mystery of Pentecost. Through Confirmation, all the baptized receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, his charisms, and the power to give witness to the Gospel openly and with courage. It is important that mystagogical catechesis accompany the grace of filial adoption received at Baptism, underlining the importance of the gift of the Holy Spirit which enables one to fully participate in the Eucharistic witness of the Church and its influence in all the spheres of life and human activity. Hence proper and systematic catechesis prior to the reception of these sacraments is of prime importance.
 - Intimate communion with Christ.
 - Apostolic charity
 - Love for the Church.
 - Holiness
 - Synod Proposition on Holiness (23) — The universal call to holiness is constitutive of the New Evangelization that sees the Saints as effective models of the variety and forms in which this vocation can be realized. What is common in the varied stories of holiness is the following of Christ expressed in a life of faith active in charity which is a privileged proclamation of the Gospel. We recognize Mary as the model of holiness that is manifest in acts of love including the supreme gift of self. Holiness is a significant part of every evangelizing commitment for the one who evangelizes and for the good of those evangelized
- Content of the New Evangelization — Again, I turn to Cardinal Ratzinger, who has I believe the most concise and profound description of what the content needs to be.
 - Conversion
 - RM 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.”
 - EN 18: “The purpose of evangelization is therefore precisely this interior change, and if it had to be expressed in one sentence the best way of stating it would be to say that the Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert, solely through the divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieu which are theirs.”
 - Ratzinger: “The fundamental content of the Old Testament is summarized in the message by John the Baptist: *metanoete* - Convert! There is no access to Jesus without the Baptist; there is no possibility of reaching Jesus without answering the call of the precursor, rather: Jesus took up the message of John in the synthesis of His own

preaching: 'repent and believe.' 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 not merely judge according to the current opinions. Thereby, to convert means: not to live as all the others live, not do what all do, not feel justified in dubious, ambiguous, evil actions just because others do the same; begin to see one's life through the eyes of God; thereby 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. All of this does not imply moralism; reducing Christianity to morality loses sight of the essence of Christ's message: the gift of a new friendship, the gift of communion with Jesus and thereby with God. ...

- Here the model for conversion is St Paul. The sign of this conversion is a desire to preach the gospel. "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel." The new evangelization is transformative. It radicalizes the life of the Christian.
- Synod Proposition 22: The drama and intensity of the age old clash between good and evil, between faith and fear should be presented as the essential background, a constituent element of the call to conversion in Christ. This struggle continues at a natural and supernatural level. "For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (Mt 7: 14). Many bishops spoke of the need for renewal in holiness in their own lives, if they are to be true and effective agents of the New Evangelization. The New Evangelization requires personal and communal conversion, new methods of evangelization and renewal of the pastoral structures, to be able to move from a pastoral strategy of maintenance to a pastoral position that is truly missionary. The New Evangelization guides us to an authentic pastoral conversion which moves us to attitudes and initiatives which leads to evaluations and changes in the dynamics of pastoral structures which no longer respond to the evangelical demands of the current time.
- Christ
 - RM 1: "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 men, as a gift of God's grace and mercy." (EN 27). "The new evangelization," according to John Paul II, "is not a matter of merely passing on doctrine but rather of a personal and profound meeting with the Savior."
 - IL 18: The Christian faith is not simply teachings, wise sayings, a code of morality or a tradition. The Christian faith is a true encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ. Transmitting the faith means to create in every place and time the conditions which lead to this encounter between the person and Jesus Christ. The goal of all evangelization is to create the possibility for this encounter, which is, at one and the same time, intimate, personal, public and communal. ... The Church is formed precisely through the grace of this relationship.
 - For JP II, this was a direct result of Vatican II's insights about the centrality of Christ in the faith:
 - GS 22: "The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. ... Christ, ... by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear."
 - Christ wants to bring people into his intimate relationship with the Father and the Spirit.
- Kingdom, Prayer
 - Ratzinger: At the "heart of the new evangelization" must be the kingdom of God, which 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 not a faraway "ultimate cause", God is not the "great architect" of deism, who created the machine of the world and is no longer part of it – on the contrary: God is the most

present and decisive reality in each and every act of my life, in each and every moment of history. ... Unfortunately, we Christians also often live as if God did not exist... Therefore, evangelization must, first of all, speak about God, proclaim the only true God. Here too we must keep the practical aspect in mind. God cannot be made known with words alone. One does not really know a person if one knows about this person second handedly. To proclaim God is to introduce to the relation with God: to teach how to pray. Prayer is faith in action. And only by experiencing life with God does the evidence of His existence appear. ... Speaking about God and speaking with God must always go together. The proclamation of God is the guide to communion with God in fraternal communion, founded and vivified by Christ. This is why the liturgy (the sacraments) are not a secondary theme next to the preaching of the living God, but the realization of our relationship with God."

- RM 18: Christ not only proclaimed the kingdom, but in him the kingdom itself became present and was fulfilled. ... The kingdom of God is not a concept, a doctrine, or a program subject to free interpretation, but it is before all else a person with the face and name of Jesus of Nazareth, the image of the invisible God.
- Cross
 - Ratzinger: Jesus' "entire life was ... a path towards the cross, ascension towards Jerusalem. Jesus did not redeem the world with beautiful word but with His suffering and His death. His passion is the inexhaustible source of life for the world; the passion gives power to His words. The Lord Himself ... formulated this law of fruitfulness in the word of the grain of seed that dies, fallen to earth (Jn 12:24). This law too is valid until the end of the world and is ... fundamental for new evangelization. All of history demonstrates this. It is very easy to demonstrate this in the history of Christianity.
 - Here, I would like to recall only the beginning of evangelization in the life of Saint Paul. The success of his mission was not the fruit of great rhetorical art or pastoral prudence; the fruitfulness was tied to the suffering, to the communion in the passion with Christ. "But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah" said the Lord. The sign of Jonah is the crucified Christ – they are the witnesses that complete "what is lacking in Christ's afflictions" (Col 1:24). Throughout all the periods of history, the words of Tertullian have always been verified: the blood of martyrs is a seed. ... Saint Augustine comments on the text Jn 21:16 in the following way: 'Tend my sheep,' means suffer for my sheep. A mother cannot give life to a child without suffering. Each birth requires suffering, is suffering, and becoming a Christian is a birth. ... We cannot give life to others without giving up our own lives. The process of expropriation indicated above is the concrete form (expressed in many different ways) of giving one's life. And let us think about the words of the Savior: "... whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will save it..." (Mk 8:35).
- Eternal Life, Judgment
 - Ratzinger: "The proclamation of the Kingdom of God is the proclamation of the God present, the God that knows us, listen to us; the God that enters into history to do justice. Therefore, this preaching is also the proclamation of justice, the proclamation of our responsibility.... Man will be judged. He must account for things. This certitude is of value both for the powerful as well as the simple ones. Where this is honored, the limitations of every power in this world are traced. God renders justice, and only He may ultimately do this. We will be able to do this better the more we are able to live under the eyes of God and to communicate the truth of justice to the world. Thus the article of faith in justice, its force in the formation of consciences, is a central theme of the Gospel and is truly good news. It is for all those suffering the injustices of the world and who are looking for justice. ...
 - Justice exists. The injustices of the world are not the final word of history. Only whoever does not want there to be justice can oppose this truth. If we seriously consider the judgment and the seriousness of the responsibility for us that emerges from this, we will

be able to understand full well the other aspect of this proclamation, that is redemption, the fact that Jesus, in the cross, takes on our sins; God Himself, in the passion of the Son, becomes the advocate for us sinners, and thus making penance possible, the hope for the repentant sinner, hope expressed in a marvelous way by the words of Saint John: Before God, we will reassure our heart.... Only by believing in the just judgment of God, only by hungering and thirsting for justice (cf. Mt 5:6) will we open up our hearts, our life to divine mercy. This can be seen: it isn't true that faith in eternal life makes earthly life insignificant. To the contrary: only if the measure of our life is eternity, then also this life of ours on earth is great and its value immense. God is not the competitor in our life, but the guarantor of our greatness. This way we return to the starting point: God. If we take the Christian message into well thought out consideration, we are not speaking about a whole lot of things. In reality, the Christian message is very simple: we speak about God and man, and this way we say everything."

- Beauty

- Synod Proposition on the Way of Beauty (20): In the New Evangelization, there should be a particular attention paid to the way of beauty: Christ, the "Good Shepherd" (cf. *Jn* 10:11) is the Truth in person, the beautiful revelation in sign, pouring himself out without measure. It is important to give testimony to the young who follow Jesus, not only of his goodness and truth, but also of the fullness of his beauty. As Augustine affirmed, "it is not possible to love what is not beautiful" (*Confessions*, Bk IV, 13.20). Beauty attracts us to love, through which God reveals to us his face in which we believe. In this light artists feel themselves both spoken to and privileged communicators of the New Evangelization. In the formation of seminarians, education in beauty should not be neglected nor education in the sacred arts as we are reminded in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council (cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 129). Beauty should always be a special dimension of the new evangelization. It is necessary that the Church be vigilant in caring for and promoting the quality of the art that is permitted in the sacred spaces reserved for liturgical celebrations, guarding both its beauty and the truthfulness of its expression. It is important for the New Evangelization that the Church be present in all fields of art, so as to support with her spiritual and pastoral presence the artists in their search for creativity and to foster a living and true spiritual experience of salvation that becomes present in their work.
- Back in the mid-1980s in his book length interview, Pope Benedict said something he has repeated on many occasions afterward about the new evangelization, which is something we ought to ponder. It is also something that brings us back to the Year of Faith and can serve as a summary.
- Ratzinger Report
 - The only really effective apologia for Christianity comes down to two arguments, namely the saints the Church has produced and the art which has grown in her womb.
 - Better witness is borne to the Lord by the splendor of holiness and art which have arisen in the community of believers than by clever excuses which apologetics has come up with to justify the dark sides which, sadly, are so frequent in the Church's human history. If the Church is to continue to transform and humanize the world, how can she dispense with beauty in her liturgies, that beauty which is so closely linked with love and with the radiance of the Resurrection? No. Christians must not be too easily satisfied. They must make their Church into a place where beauty—and hence truth—is at home. Without this the world will become the first circle of hell.
 - He then spoke of a famous theologian who admitted he was a barbarian. Ratzinger commented: "A theologian [and we could add, a priest, a pastor, a bishop] who does not love art, poetry, music and nature can be dangerous

Blindness and deafness toward the beautiful are not incidental: they necessarily are reflected in his theology [and preaching!]

- The last two points are pretty straight forward, I think, for most of us. By baptism and confirmation all Catholics are agents of the New Evangelization, summoned to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in seeking to bring others into communion with Christ and his body. And in terms of the privileged recipients, it begins with those whom the Lord has put into our path as our neighbors, while at the same time there needs to be special outreaches to evangelize our culture, to bring the Gospel to those in the media, education, politics and civic life, the economic sector, science and technology, the youth and other religions.
- Agents of the New Evangelization
 - We could say, first, that the primary agent is God the Holy Spirit, who helps us to fulfill in Christ his own mission.
 - But the “secondary” agents of the new evangelization are likewise important. Christ could have stayed on earth until the end of time to proclaim the Gospel himself. Instead, he ascended to heaven, to take off our training wheels and give us the dignity of cooperating with him in the salvation of our brothers and sisters, parents, friends, children, even strangers and those we’ll never meet this side of the parousia.
 - When we think about who are the agents, many think about missionaries proper, or priests, or religious, or catechists. We can easily think of someone else. In the past (and even presently), for most Catholics evangelization was perceived to be the work of a special group within the Church, e.g., those with a special vocation. In the new evangelization, however, it is clear that the call is to the entire people of God
 - All of us
 - 15 times in RM, JP II mentions that it is the vocation and mission of all Christians.
 - I don’t think this will come as a surprise to priests or to religious. But it does come as a surprise to lay people. That’s why in CL, Blessed John Paul II stressed so much the participation of lay people in the New Evangelization:
 - CL 30,33: “Every one of the ... lay faithful is asked to have a missionary zeal which will increase their effectiveness as participants in a re-evangelization. The lay faithful, precisely because they are members of the Church, have the vocation and mission of proclaiming the Gospel: they are prepared for this work by the sacraments of Christian initiation and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In a very clear and significant passage from the Second Vatican Council we read: "As sharers in the mission of Christ, priest, prophet and king, the lay faithful have an active part to play in the life and activity of the Church.... Strengthened by their active participation in the liturgical life of their community, they are eager to do their share in apostolic works of that community. They lead to the Church people who are perhaps far removed from it; they earnestly cooperate in presenting the Word of God, especially by means of catechetical instruction; and offer their special skills to make the care of souls and the administration of the temporal goods of the Church more efficient."
 - EN 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 ... 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. It also includes other realities that are open to evangelization, such as human love, the family, the education of children and adolescents, professional work, suffering. The more Gospel-inspired lay people there are engaged in these realities, clearly involved in them, competent to promote them and conscious that they must exercise to the full their Christian powers which are often buried and suffocated, the more these realities will be at the service of the kingdom of God and therefore of salvation in Jesus Christ, without in any way losing or sacrificing

their human content but rather pointing to a transcendent dimension which is often disregarded.

- Instrumentum Laboris 119. Every Christian needs to feel the call to engage in this task, which comes from one's baptismal identity. Every Christian must seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit, who provides the strength and means to respond to it, each according to one's proper vocation. These times, in which choosing the faith and following Christ is not easy and is little understood by the world — if not outrightly resisted and opposed — make it more compelling for communities and individual Christians to be courageous witnesses of the Gospel. The reasons underlying such actions come from St. Peter the Apostle, when he asks us to give an account and respond to anyone who asks us the reason for the hope which is in us (cf. *1 Pt* 3:15). The Spirit indicates for our Christian communities the path to be followed, if they are to bring about a new season of witnessing to our faith and new forms of response (*apologia*) to anyone who asks the *logos*, the reason for our faith. These circumstances provide an occasion to renew ourselves, to make the hope and salvation given us by Jesus Christ more effectively present in the world in which we live. This demands learning a new manner of responding — "with gentleness and respect, with a clear conscience" (*1 Pt* 3:16). This task invites us to live life with the gentle power which comes from our identity as children of God, from our union with Christ in the Spirit, and from the newness which this union has created in us, and with the determination of someone who knows that the goal of all living is an encounter with God the Father in his Kingdom.
- Among the laity, the Church has always singled out the family.
 - EN 71: "One cannot fail to stress the evangelizing action of the family in the evangelizing apostolate of the laity. ... The family, like the Church, ought to be a place where the Gospel is transmitted and from which the Gospel radiates. In a family which is conscious of this mission, all the members evangelize and are evangelized. The parents not only communicate the Gospel to their children, but from their children they can themselves receive the same Gospel as deeply lived by them. And such a family becomes the evangelizer of many other families, and of the neighborhood of which it forms part."
 - IL 111. The Church acknowledges the family's responsibility in the formation and transmission of the Christian faith from the very beginning of human life. The close bond between the Church and the family arise from the assistance that the Church seeks to give to the family and that which she expects from the family. Oftentimes, families are subjected to great stress due to the hectic pace of life, the uncertainty of work, increasing instability and fatigue in the education of children that is becoming more difficult. Aware of these difficulties, the family needs the support that comes from feeling a part of a community and being accepted and listened to. The family likewise needs to be bolstered not only by the proclamation of the Gospel but also by guidance in its work of education. The commonly shared goal is to give the family an increasingly active role in the process of the transmission of the faith
- The agency of religious, particularly religious women, in the new evangelization.
 - Essential contribution
 - VC 57. The future of the new evangelization, as of all other forms of missionary activity, is unthinkable without a renewed contribution from women, especially consecrated women
 - Blessed John Paul II had focused how in previous ages the roles of religious women in spreading the faith were not emphasized.
 - St. Frances Xavier Cabrini is a clear example. There were no missionary institutes of women. The work was considered too dangerous. Not feminine enough.
 - The woman's role, if there was a role, was simply in prayer for those on the front lines.
 - We see this, for example, with nuns in the order of preacher.

women in every aspect of the life of society, and overcome all discrimination, violence and exploitation. There is reason to hope that a fuller acknowledgment of the mission of women will provide feminine consecrated life with a **heightened awareness of its specific role** and increased dedication to the cause of the Kingdom of God. This will be expressed in many different works such as involvement in **evangelization**, educational activities, participation in the formation of future priests and consecrated persons, animating Christian communities, giving spiritual support and promoting the fundamental values of life and peace. To consecrated women and their extraordinary capacity for dedication, I once again express the gratitude and admiration of the whole Church, which supports them so that they will live their vocation fully and joyfully, and feel called to the great task of helping to educate the woman of today

- Contributions
 - VC 76. The specific contribution of consecrated persons, both men and women, to evangelization is first of all the witness of a life given totally to God and to their brothers and sisters in imitation of the Savior, who out of love for humanity made himself a servant. In the work of salvation, in fact, everything comes from sharing in the divine <agape>. Consecrated persons make visible in their consecration and total dedication the loving and saving presence of Christ, the one consecrated by the Father, sent in mission.[183] Allowing themselves to be won over by him (cf. Phil. 3:12), they prepare to become in a certain way a prolongation of his humanity. The consecrated life eloquently shows that the more one lives in Christ, the better one can serve him in others, going even to the furthest missionary outposts and facing the greatest dangers.[185]
- Love for others in love of Christ
 - VC 77. Those who love God, the Father of all, cannot fail to love their fellow human beings, whom they recognize as brothers and sisters. Precisely for this reason, they cannot remain indifferent to the fact that many men and women do not know the full manifestation of God's love in Christ. The result, in obedience to Christ's commandment, is the missionary drive <ad gentes>, which every committed Christian shares with the Church, which is missionary by nature. This drive is felt above all by the members of Institutes, whether of the contemplative or of the active life. Consecrated persons, in fact, have the task of making present even among non Christians Christ who is chaste, poor, obedient, prayerful and missionary. While remaining ever faithful to their charism, they must know that they have a special share in the Church's missionary activity in virtue of their interior consecration made to God. The desire so often expressed by Therese of Lisieux, "to love you and make you loved," the ardent longing of St. Francis Xavier that many, "meditating on what the Lord God will expect from them and from the talents he has given them, would be converted using the right means and the spiritual exercises to know and feel within themselves the divine will, and so, adapting themselves more to that will than to their own inclinations, they would say: 'Lord, here I am, what do you want me to do? Lead me wherever you will,'"[190] and other similar testimonies of countless holy men and women manifest the unsuppressible missionary drive which distinguishes and ennobles the consecrated life.
- A response to present challenges
 - VC 81. If the great challenges which modern history poses to the new evangelization are to be faced successfully, what is needed above all is a consecrated life **that is continually open to challenge by the revealed word and the signs of the times.** The memory of the great evangelizers, both men and women, who were themselves profoundly evangelized, shows that in order to face the world of today it is necessary to have people who are lovingly dedicated to the Lord and his Gospel. "Consecrated persons, because of their specific vocation, are called to manifest the unity between self-evangelization and witness, between interior renewal and apostolic fervor, between being and acting, showing that dynamism arises always from the first element of each of these

pairs." The new evangelization, like that of all times, will be effective if it proclaims from the rooftops what it has first lived in intimacy with the Lord. It calls for strong personalities inspired by saintly fervor.

- The new evangelization demands that consecrated persons have <a thorough awareness of the theological significance of the challenges of our time.> These challenges must be weighed with careful joint discernment, with a view to renewing the mission. Courage in proclaiming the Lord Jesus must be accompanied by trust in Providence, which is at work in the world and which "orders everything, even human differences, for the greater good of the Church."
- Important elements enabling Institutes to play a successful part in new evangelization are fidelity to the founding charism, communion with all those who in the Church are involved in the same undertaking, especially the Bishops, and cooperation with all people of good will. All this requires a careful discernment of the calls which the Holy Spirit makes to each Institute, whether in areas where no great immediate progress is foreseen or in other areas where a consoling rebirth is anticipated. In every place and circumstance consecrated persons should be zealous heralds of Jesus Christ, ready to respond with the wisdom of the Gospel to the questions posed today by the anxieties and the urgent needs of the human heart.
- RM 69. To institutes of active life, I would recommend the immense opportunities for works of charity, for the proclamation of the Gospel, for Christian education, cultural endeavors and solidarity with the poor and those suffering from discrimination, abandonment and oppression. Whether they pursue a strictly missionary goal or not, such institutes should ask themselves how willing and able they are to broaden their action in order to extend God's kingdom. In recent times many institutes have responded to this request, which I hope will be given even greater consideration and implementation for a more authentic service. The Church needs to make known the great gospel values of which she is the bearer. No one witnesses more effectively to these values than those who profess the consecrated life in chastity, poverty and obedience, in a total gift of self to God and in complete readiness to serve humanity and society after the example of Christ.
- Evangelizing Community — All Church institutions must take up their role in the New Evangelization and evangelize by their community in truth, in hope, in faith, in charity.
 - IL 81. The new evangelization is a call to the Church to rediscover her missionary origins. According to many responses, the new evangelization can devote work in this area to leading Christian communities to be less concentrated on themselves inwardly in the midst of the changes already taking place and more engaged in proclaiming the faith to others. In this regard, much is expected from parishes that are seen as an entryway, open to everyone in every place on the globe, to the Christian faith and an experience of the Church. In addition to their being the place for ordinary pastoral life, liturgical celebrations, the dispensation of the sacraments, catechesis and the catechumenate, parishes have the responsibility to become real centres for propagating and bearing witness to the Christian experience and places for attentively listening to people and ascertaining their needs. Parishes are places where a person receives instruction on searching for the truth, where faith is nourished and strengthened and where the Christian message and God's plan for humanity and the world is communicated. They are the prime communities for experiencing the joy that comes from being not only gathered together by the Spirit but prepared to live one's proper vocation as a missionary.
 - When we're evangelized, we evangelize others
 - EA 68. An encounter with the Lord brings about a profound transformation in all who do not close themselves off from him. The first impulse coming from this transformation is to communicate to others the richness discovered in the experience of the encounter. This does not mean simply teaching what we have come to know but also, like the Samaritan woman, enabling others to encounter Jesus personally: "Come and see" (Jn 4:29). The result will be the same as that which took place in the heart of

the Samaritans, who said to the woman: "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world" (Jn 4:42). The Church, which draws her life from the permanent and mysterious presence of her Risen Lord, has as the core of her mission a duty "to lead all people to encounter Christ." ... The burning desire to invite others to encounter the One whom we have encountered is the start of the evangelizing mission to which the whole Church is called. This mission has become particularly urgent today in America, five hundred years after the first evangelization, as we prepare to commemorate with gratitude the two thousandth anniversary of the coming of the only-begotten Son of God into the world.

- EN 23-24. The person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others. Here lies the test of truth, the touchstone of evangelization: it is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn."

- Lineamenta 17. The goal of the entire process of transmitting the faith is to make the Church a community of witnesses of the Gospel.

○ In sum:

- We all have a part to play.
- NMI 40: "To nourish ourselves with the word in order to be "servants of the word" in the work of evangelization: this is surely a priority for the Church at the dawn of the new millennium. Even in countries evangelized many centuries ago, the reality of a "Christian society" which, amid all the frailties which have always marked human life, measured itself explicitly on Gospel values, is now gone. ... Over the years, I have often repeated the summons to the new evangelization. I do so again now, especially in order to insist that we must rekindle in ourselves the impetus of the beginnings and allow ourselves to be filled with the ardor of the apostolic preaching which followed Pentecost. We must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:16). This passion will not fail to stir in the Church a new sense of mission, which cannot be left to a group of "specialists" but must involve the responsibility of all the members of the People of God. Those who have come into genuine contact with Christ cannot keep him for themselves, they must proclaim him. A new apostolic outreach is needed, which will be lived as the everyday commitment of Christian communities and groups. This should be done however with the respect due to the different paths of different people and with sensitivity to the diversity of cultures in which the Christian message must be planted, in such a way that the particular values of each people will not be rejected but purified and brought to their.

• Privileged Recipients of the New Evangelization

- First, those who are close to us. The fellow members of our community, our family, friends, co-workers, fellow students, teammates, and neighbors, parishioners, whatever our state in life.
 - We always start with those whom the Lord has put in our circle, not with those in faraway lands.
 - This is the means by which, one-on-one, with friendship, with a real witness of the joy that comes to us from God, we can begin to warm them up to what Jesus can do in a person.
- But the Church also focuses on certain audiences that deserve special attention.
- Culture
 - Pope John Paul II teaches that not only individuals but whole cultures need to be transformed by influence of the Gospel.
 - EA 70: "the Synod Fathers rightly felt that "the new evangelization calls for a clearly conceived, serious and well organized effort to evangelize culture". The Son of God, by taking upon himself our human nature, became incarnate within a particular people, even though his redemptive death brought salvation to all people, of every culture, race and condition. The gift of his Spirit and his love are meant for each and every people and culture, in order to bring them all into unity after the example of the perfect unity existing in the Triune God. For this to happen, it is necessary to inculturate preaching in

such a way that the Gospel is proclaimed in the language and in the culture of its hearers. At the same time, however, it must not be forgotten that the Paschal Mystery of Christ, the supreme manifestation of the infinite God within the finitude of history, is the only valid point of reference for all of humanity on its pilgrimage in search of authentic unity and true peace. In America, the mestiza face of the Virgin of Guadalupe was from the start a symbol of the inculturation of the Gospel, of which she has been the lodestar and the guide.”

- Paul VI says that this evangelization must be deep
 - EN 20: “What matters is to evangelize man's culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots), ... always taking the person as one's starting-point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God.”
- He says it is at the heart of the drama of our time.
 - EN 21: “The split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times. Therefore every effort must be made to ensure a full evangelization of culture, or, more correctly, of cultures. They have to be regenerated by an encounter with the Gospel. But this encounter will not take place if the Gospel is not proclaimed.
- The Lineamenta describe why it's at the forefront of our epoch's great drama:
 - The first sector calling for the new evangelization is culture.
 - In our times, we find ourselves in an era of a profound secularism which has led to a loss in the capacity to listen and understand the words of the Gospel as a living and life-giving message. This is particularly the case in the western world, where history and identity have been deeply affected by events, changes in society and ways of thinking.
 - In our cultures, many view the secularizing trend, in a positive sense, as a liberation from the things of the past or as the way completely to separate any idea of the transcendent from the world and humanity. Although anti-Christian, anti-religious and anti-clerical references are sometimes heard today, secularism, in recent times, has not taken the form of a direct, outright denial of God, religion or Christianity. Instead, the secularizing movement has taken a more subtle tone in cultural forms which invade people's everyday lives and foster a mentality in which God is completely or partially left out of life and human consciousness.
 - In this way, secularism has entered the Christian life and ecclesial communities and has become not simply an external threat for believers but something to be faced each day in life in the various manifestations of the so-called culture of relativism.
 - Furthermore, this tendency is having serious anthropological implications that put in question basic human experiences, for example, the relation between man and woman as well as the meaning of reproduction and death itself.
 - Traces of a secularized way of looking at life can be seen in the daily lives of many Christians, who are oftentimes influenced, if not completely conditioned, by the culture of images with its models and opposing forces. Temptations to superficiality and self-centredness, arising from a predominating hedonistic and consumer-oriented mentality, are not easily overcome. The "death of God" announced decades ago by so many intellectuals has given way to an unproductive cult of the individual.
 - A real possibility exists that the fundamental elements of explaining the faith might be lost, which will then lead to not only spiritual atrophism and emptiness of heart, but also, on the other extreme, substitute forms of religious affiliation and a vague sense of the spiritual.
 - In such situations, the new evangelization is seen as the needed impetus for weary and worn-out communities to help them rediscover the joy of the Christian experience, to find again "the love you had at first" which was lost (Rev 2:4) and to emphasize the true

meaning of freedom in the search for truth.

- We should note that there are powerful cultural forces against evangelization
 - CTH: “Against the spirit of the world, the Church takes up anew each day a struggle that is none other than the struggle for the world's soul. If in fact, on the one hand, the Gospel and evangelization are present in this world, on the other, there is also present a powerful anti-evangelization which is well organized and has the means to vigorously oppose the Gospel and evangelization. The struggle for the soul of the contemporary world is at its height where the spirit of this world seems strongest. In this sense the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* speaks of *modern Areopagi*. Today these *Areopagi* are the worlds of science, culture, and media; these are the worlds of writers and artists, the worlds where the intellectual elite are formed.”
- How do we evangelize the culture? Two fundamental ways:
 - By seeking to renew culture by cultural activities. Music, art, films, plays, books. Giving people a real alternative.
 - By seeking to evangelize leading cultural agents. Praying for them. Seeking to befriend them.
- Media
 - RM 37: "Since the very evangelization of modern culture depends to a great extent on the influence of the media, it is not enough to use the media simply to spread the Christian message and the Church's authentic teaching. It is also necessary to integrate that message into the "new culture" created by modern communications." (RM 37)
 - EA 72: “For the new evangelization to be effective, it is essential to have a deep understanding of the culture of our time in which the social communications media are most influential. Therefore, knowledge and use of the media, whether the more traditional forms or those which technology has produced in recent times, is indispensable. Contemporary reality demands a capacity to learn the language, nature and characteristics of mass media. Using the media correctly and competently can lead to a genuine inculturation of the Gospel. At the same time, the media also help to shape the culture and mentality of people today, which is why there must be special pastoral activity aimed at those working in the media. On this point, the Synod Fathers suggested a range of concrete initiatives to make the Gospel effectively present in the world of social communications: the training of pastoral workers for this task; the support of high-quality production centers; the careful and effective use of satellite and other new technologies; teaching the faithful to be “critical” in their use of the media; joining forces in order to acquire and manage new transmitters and TV and radio networks, as well as coordinating those already in operation. Catholic publications also deserve support and need to develop the excellence sought by all.”
 - Lineamenta:
 - Another “great sector ... has an increasingly determined effect on the lives of individuals and the collective conscience, namely, the means of social communications, which, while today providing great possibilities for the Church, also represents one of her greatest challenges. Although these means of social communications, in their initial stages, were limited to the industrialized world, they are now able to influence vast portions of developing countries. Today, no place in the world is beyond reach and, consequently, unaffected by the media and digital culture, which is fast becoming the "forum" of public life and social interaction. Undoubtedly, the diffusion of this culture has its benefits, including major access to information; greater opportunities for knowledge, exchange and new forms of solidarity; and the capacity to build an increasingly "world culture" which leads to a common patrimony of values and a greater development of thought and human expression.
 - These potentialities, however, cannot hide the inherent risks when this kind of culture is taken to an extreme, including a selfish concentration on oneself and personal needs; an overemphasis on the emotive aspects of relations and social bonds; the loss of the

objective values of experience, reflection and thought, which are reduced in many cases, to ways of reconfirming one's individualistic feelings; the progressive alienation of the moral and social dimensions of life which makes others a mirror for self or simply a spectator to one's actions; and, finally, the formation of a culture centered on passing novelties, the present moment and outward appearances, indeed a society which is incapable of remembering the past and with no sense of the future.

- In this sector, the new evangelization means that Christians need to show boldness in these "new *aeropaghi*", where they live everyday, and find the means and approaches to ensure that the Church's patrimony in education and knowledge, safeguarded by the Christian tradition, has a part to play in these ultra-modern places.
- IL 59-62:
 - The *Lineamenta* responses also made note of *communications*, the sixth sector, which provide great opportunities today and, at the same time, represent a major challenge for the Church. Initially, communications was a characteristic of the industrialized world only. However, in today's globalized world, this sector also affects a vast number of developing countries. Every place on the globe, bar none, can be reached by communications, and is therefore subject to the influence of the electronic and media culture. These media are fast becoming the "forum" of civic life and social experience, which is sufficiently illustrated in the widespread use of the internet. The new digital technologies have given rise to an entirely new social space where the connections created have the potential of influencing society and culture. The media process, resulting from these technologies, is having an impact on people's lives and is changing reality itself by incisively entering into people's experiences and widening human potential. Our perception of self, others and the world are influenced by them. Communication technologies and the space created by them must therefore be viewed positively, without prejudice, as a resource that requires a discerning eye and a wise and responsible employment.
 - The Church is engaged in these areas created by the media and has, from the very beginning, utilized these means as a useful way to proclaim the Gospel. Today, in addition to the more traditional means of communication, especially the printed word and radio, which, according to the responses, have moderately increased in recent years, new *media* are increasingly becoming a major factor in the Church's ministry of evangelization, making interaction possible at various levels: local, national, continental and global. The potential for using both old and new media is clear, as is the need to take advantage of this newly created social space and introduce the vocabulary and forms of the Christian tradition. An attentive and shared discernment process is needed not only to better assess the possibilities of their use in proclaiming the Gospel, but also to understand properly the risks and dangers involved. Indeed, the spread of the culture created by communications undoubtedly brings many benefits. Among them are: a greater access to information; more opportunities for knowledge and dialogue; new forms of solidarity; and the ability to foster an increasingly global culture which leads to a shared heritage of values and the better development of thought and human activity. This potential, however, does not eliminate the dangers inherent in the excessive diffusion of such a culture. Their effects are already being manifested in a deeply, self-centred attentiveness to individual needs only, and an exaltation of emotion in relationships and social ties, thus leading to a diminution and loss of the objective value of deeply human experiences, such as meditation and silence. It equally is leading to an excess in holding to one's individual thinking and a gradual reduction of ethics and civic life to appearance only. These dangers might eventually result in a so-called culture which is short-lived, immediately gratifying and based on mere appearance or a society incapable of looking to either the past or the future. In such a situation, Christians must be bold in entering these "new areopaghi", learning to evaluate them in light of the

Gospel and finding the instruments and methods to ensure that, even in these places, the educational patrimony and the wisdom guarded by Christian Tradition is heard today

- So we're called to evangelize THROUGH the media and to evangelize those IN the media. We do so by sympathy. Praising them when they do good stories. Pitching stories to them. Not demonizing the media, which will never work. It's clear that some have clear prejudices, but most don't. They have only a superficial understanding of the issues and are trying to be "objective" based on what they can find fast. They also seek to present opinions rather than seek the truth.
- Economy
 - Lineamenta: [Another] sector in which changes call for the Church's evangelizing activity, is the economy. On many occasions, the Magisterium of many Popes has denounced the growing disproportion in the northern and southern hemispheres in access to resources and their distribution as well as the damage to creation. The persistent economic crisis today illustrates the problem of using material forces to establish rules in a global market intended to ensure greater justice in relations among peoples. Although the communications media is giving less coverage to these problems, beginning with the plight of the poor, the Church needs to become more aware of these concerns and take concrete measures to address them.
 - Obviously whole culture of work. Profit isn't only motive. Business ethics. Transitive and intransitive dimensions of work.
 - IL 56: In great part a direct cause of migration, the economy is highlighted for the tensions and forms of violence related to it, and the inequality it causes within and among nations. Many responses, not simply those from developing countries, decried a clear and decisive increase in the separation between the rich and the poor. On innumerable occasions, papal magisterium has denounced the growing imbalance between the North and South in the access to and distribution of resources, as well as the damage done to creation. Today's continuing economic crisis is characterized by the problem of the use of both human and natural resources. Particular Churches are invited to live the evangelical ideal of poverty and are expected to do still more in terms of awareness and concrete activity, even if the media does not give sufficient coverage to them.
 - IL 71. The economic sector, with its changes, has also been seen as a favourable place in witnessing to our faith. Many responses described the efforts of many Christian communities on behalf of the poor, an activity which can boast of ancient origins and a fruitfulness which is still very promising. In today's serious, widespread economic crisis, many responses have mentioned an increase in charitable activity by Christian communities through the establishment of additional institutions dedicated to supporting the poor, and programmes within particular Churches to develop a greater awareness of charitable work. Many responses wanted the works of charity to be given greater prominence as an instrument of the new evangelization. The dedication and solidarity of many Christian communities towards the poor, the charitable works in which they are engaged and the simplicity of their life-style in a world which places great emphasis on buying and having, are a particularly beneficial means in proclaiming the Gospel and witnessing to our faith
- Science and Technological research
 - Lineamenta: We are living at a moment when people still marvel at the wonders resulting from continual advances in scientific and technological research. All of us experience the benefits of this progress in our daily lives, benefits on which we are becoming increasingly dependent. As a result, science and technology are in danger of becoming today's new idols. In a digitalized and globalized world, science can easily be considered a new religion, to which we turn with questions concerning truth and meaning, even though we know that the responses provided are only partial and not totally satisfying. New forms of "gnosis" are emerging where technology itself becomes a kind of philosophy in which knowledge and meaning are derived from an unreal structuring of life. These new cults, increasing each day, ultimately end up by turning religious practice into a clinical form of seeking prosperity and instant gratification.
 - Bioethical issues.

- Technological imperative.
- IL 58: The fifth sector is *scientific research and technology*. We live in an age that still marvels at the wonders of the continuing achievements that result from research in these fields. Each day, we have the possibility of experiencing the benefits of these advances and are increasingly becoming dependent upon them. Inherent in the many positive aspects is the danger of excessive expectations and manipulation. Today, science and technology run the risk of becoming the new idols of the present. In a digitalized and globalized world, science can easily become "our new religion". New forms of gnosis are arising which make technology a form of wisdom where an almost magical approach to life leads to concepts of "knowing" and "meaning", as witnessed in the rise of new cults, which exploit the religious practices of healing, readily followed by people, and are structured as religions promising prosperity and instant gratification
- Civic and Political Life
 - Lineamenta: The changes that have taken place since the Second Vatican Council can rightly be called colossal. The fall of Communism, which ended the division of the western world into two blocks, has helped foster religious freedom and has provided the opportunity for age-old Churches to re-establish themselves. New economic, political and religious forces are emerging in global politics from places like Asia and the Islamic world. This has created an unprecedented yet totally unknown situation which is rich in potential but also fraught with risks and new temptations of dominion and power.
 - In this sector, the Gospel must be transmitted in the following endeavours: the duty to seek peace; the development and liberation of peoples; improvement in forms of world and national governments; the construction of possible forms of listening, living together, dialogue and collaboration by various cultures and religions; the safeguarding of the rights of persons, entire peoples and, above all, minorities; support for the most vulnerable in society; and the stewardship of creation and the commitment to the future of our planet
 - IL 57: The fourth sector is *civic life*. From the time of the Second Vatican Council to the present, the changes which have occurred in this sector can rightly be called momentous. The division of the western world into two blocks ended with the fall of the Communist ideology, leading to religious freedom and the possibility of reorganizing the Churches of ancient origin. The emergence on the world stage of new economic, political and religious actors from the Islamic and Asian worlds has created an entirely new and unknown situation, rich in potential, but fraught with dangers and new temptations for dominion and power. Many responses have highlighted a variety of urgent situations in this sector, namely, a commitment to peace; the development and liberation of peoples; better international regulation and interaction of national governments; the search for possible areas of listening, coexistence, dialogue and collaboration between different cultures and religions; the defence of human rights and peoples, especially minorities; the promotion of the most vulnerable; and the integrity of creation and a commitment to the future of our planet. Various particular Churches are engaged in dealing with these issues, which are being diligently pursued and fostered in the daily life of our communities.
 - There is a great need for the formation of our politicians to be God's servants first, to learn how to be light, leaven and salt. We also need to form people to get into politics. Morton Blackwell's sage advice to me about politics' needing men and women of character who come in and don't sell out. To run for office today takes a lot of courage. There will be opposition research. You'll be attacked. Your family will come under a microscope. It's tough on a family. But it's an important mission and is important in creating the possibilities for the evangelization of people to take place.
- Religious Sector
 - IL 63-67: The *Lineamenta* responses recommended adding religion as a seventh sector, thereby providing the means to more thoroughly understand, in many different cultures, the return of a religious sense and the need for various forms of spirituality, especially among the young. Even though the present process of secularization is leading to a weakened sense of the spiritual in many persons and an emptiness of heart, many regions of the world are showing signs of a significant religious revival. This phenomenon has an impact on the Catholic Church herself in

providing resources and opportunities for evangelization which were not present a few decades ago. ... In fact, the situation provides the opportunity to restore an element which is part of the human identity, namely religion, thereby going beyond the limitations and impoverishment of an idea of a person viewed only from a horizontal perspective. This phenomenon fosters religious experience and re-establishes its centrality in people's minds, in history, and in the meaning of life itself and the search for truth.

- Many responses, however, have voiced a concern about the naive and emotional character of this return to a sense of religion. Instead of being a gradual and complex development in a person's search for truth, the return to religion, in many cases, has not been a very liberating experience. Consequently, the positive aspects of rediscovering God and the sacred are viewed as impoverished and obscured by a fundamentalism which frequently manipulates religion to justify acts of violence and, in extreme but fortunately limited cases, even terrorism
- This is the framework for treating the pressing problem of the proliferation of new religious groups which can be likened to sects. In this regard, they repeatedly cite the contention in the *Lineamenta* that these groups exercise an emotional and psychological dominance and promote a religion promising prosperity and success in life. At the same time, some responses state that the situation needs to be carefully watched so that Christian communities will not allow themselves to be influenced by these new forms of religious experience and give in to the temptation to imitate their aggressive, proselytizing methods, instead of following the Christian approach to proclaiming the Gospel. On the other hand, the responses insist that Christian communities need to approach proclaiming the Gospel and providing pastoral care in the faith in such a way that the presence of these religious groups could serve as a means for these Christian communities to become more zealous and prepared to work towards giving individuals a sense of meaning in their lives
- This situation gives even greater meaning to the Church's encounters and dialogue with the great religious traditions which have grown over the decades and continue to intensify. These encounters are a promising opportunity to better perceive the complexity of the vocabulary and forms of the element of religion in humanity as seen in other religious experiences. Such encounters and dialogue also allow Catholics better to understand the ways in which the Christian faith expresses the religious nature of the human soul. At the same time, they enrich the religious heritage of humanity with the unique character of the Christian faith

○ Education

- Synod proposition on the education of children (27) and adults (28)
 - Education is a constitutive dimension of evangelization. To proclaim the Risen Jesus Christ is to accompany all human beings in their personal story, in their development and in their spiritual vocation. Education needs, at the same time, to promote everything that is true, good and beautiful that is a part of the human person, that is to say, to educate the mind and the emotions to appreciate reality. Children, teenagers and young people have a right to be evangelized and educated. The schools and Catholic universities respond in this way to this need. Public institutions should recognize and support this right. Schools should assist families in introducing children into the beauty of the faith. Schools offer a great opportunity to transmit the faith or at least to make it known. The Synod Fathers are grateful for the work of education carried out by thousands of teachers, male and female, in Catholic educational institutions in the five continents. Because of the singular role of teachers, it is important that they receive ongoing formation in carrying out their responsibilities. Schools must be free to teach. This freedom is an inalienable right. For this reason in order to ensure that our institutions are agents of evangelization and not just products of evangelization, the Synod: - Encourages Catholic educational institutions to do all that is possible to preserve their identity as ecclesial institutions; - Invites all teachers to embrace the leadership which is theirs as baptized disciples of Jesus, giving witness through their vocation as educators; and - Urges particular Churches, religious families, and all those who have responsibility in the educational institutions, to facilitate the co-responsibility

of lay people, offering adequate formation and accompaniment for this.

- One cannot speak of the New Evangelization if the catechesis of adults is non-existent, fragmented, weak or neglected. When these defects are present, pastoral ministry faces a very serious challenge. The phases and levels of the catechumenate of the Church show how biblically, catechetically, spiritually and liturgically a person's history and faith-journey can be understood as a vocation through a relationship with God (cf. *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 18; *Instrumentum laboris*, 92). In all these things, the public character of the decision of faith which the catechumen makes, which gradually grows in the community and the diocese, has a positive impact on all the faithful.
- EA 71. Education can play an outstanding role in promoting the inculturation of the Gospel.
 - First, Catholic Centers
 - EA 71. Catholic centers of education ... will be able to engage in authentic evangelization only if at all levels — including that of the university — they clearly preserve their Catholic orientation. The content of the education they impart should make constant reference to Jesus Christ and his message as the Church presents it in her dogmatic and moral teaching. Only in this way will they train truly Christian leaders in the different spheres of human activity, and in society, especially in politics, economics, science, art and philosophical reflection. ... Pastoral work in Catholic universities ... must encourage a commitment to the apostolate on the part of the students themselves, so that they can become the evangelizers of the university world.
 - Something similar must also be said about Catholic schools, particularly with regard to secondary education: "A special effort should be made to strengthen the Catholic identity of schools, whose specific character is based on an educational vision having its origin in the person of Christ and its roots in the teachings of the Gospel. Catholic schools must seek not only to impart a quality education from the technical and professional standpoint, but also and above all provide for the integral formation of the human person
- Lineamenta: Proposing truth. B16 talks about Educational Emergency, especially in non-Catholic educational institutions.
 - Many consider speaking of truth as too onerous and too "authoritarian". Such thinking leads to doubting the goodness of life - "Is it good to be a human being?" "Is it good to be alive?"- and the validity of relationships and commitments which make up life. In such a context, how is it possible to propose to young people and transmit to generation-after-generation - both as individuals and communities - even the most basic elements of stability and certitude, rules for living, the authentic meaning of human existence and goals to be pursued? As a result, education increasingly tends to be reduced to simply communicating to persons determined skills and teaching succeeding generations to gratify their desire for happiness through the products of consumerism or through a short-lived self-gratification. In light of this, parents and teachers are easily tempted to relinquish their proper educational task and, no longer understanding what their role might be, the mission entrusted to them.
 - This constitutes the "educational emergency": we are no longer able to offer to the young and new generations all that we are supposed to transmit to them. We are also debtors in their regard concerning the true values which serve as the foundation for living. In this way, the essential purpose of education ends up unfulfilled and forgotten, namely, forming individuals capable of living life to the full and of making their unique contribution to the common good. In various places, the question of authentic education is increasingly being raised as well as the need for those who are truly educators. Parents (concerned and oftentimes in anguish about the future of their children) are requesting the same of teachers (who live the sad experience of the degradation of school) and society itself, where the very basis for living together is being threatened.
- EA 71. In the overall work of the new evangelization, the educational sector occupies a place of

honor. For this reason, the activity of all Catholic teachers, including those working in non-denominational schools, should be encouraged. I also make an urgent appeal to men and women religious not to abandon this field which is so important for the new evangelization.

○ Young People

- Must evangelize the young and help them to become evangelists of their peers.
- CTH: “In its ever renewed encounter with man, evangelization is *linked to generational change*. Generations come and go which have distanced themselves from Christ and the Church, which have accepted a secular model of thinking and living or upon which such a model has been imposed. Meanwhile, the Church is always looking toward the future. She constantly goes out to meet new generations. And new generations clearly seem to be accepting with enthusiasm what their elders seemed to have rejected. What does this mean? It means that *Christ is forever young*. It means that the Holy Spirit is incessantly at work.”
- JP II mentions in CTH about the WYDs and how they are expressions that the Church is experiencing a “true rebirth.”
- RM 91:
 - “You are the hope of this two-thousand-year-old Church of ours: being young in faith, you must be like the first Christians and radiate enthusiasm and courage, in generous devotion to God and neighbor. In a word, you must set yourselves on the path of holiness. Only thus can you be a sign of God in the world and re-live in your own countries the missionary epic of the early Church. You will also be a leaven of missionary spirit for the older churches....”

• Pope Francis and the New Evangelization

- Now we turn to seeing how Pope Francis puts all of this into practice.
- He’s Pope essentially because of a brief 4 minute and 44 second talk on the New Evangelization he gave during the General Congregations on March 9. It discussed in very deep terms the reform the Church needs in order to be able to spread the Gospel.
 - Cardinal Bergoglio told the cardinals that the Church exists and is impelled by Jesus to evangelize, to come out of herself and go to the ends of the earth — not just geographically but also to those at the periphery of existence, who are alienated from God and others through sin, pain, injustice, ignorance, ideology, material and spiritual poverty, and other types of misery.
 - When those in the Church lose this “apostolic zeal,” when the Church doesn’t come out of herself to bring Christ to others, she becomes self-referential and sick. “The evils that over the course of time happen in ecclesial institutions,” he said, “have their root in a self-reference and a sort of theological narcissism. ... The self-referent Church keeps Jesus Christ within herself and does not let him come out.”
 - The chief corruption of the Church, he underlined, happens when she becomes narcissistic, when she starts looking at herself rather than looking toward God and toward others Jesus came from heaven and died to save.
 - We saw this corruption among the apostles who on several occasions began to focus on jockeying for position in an earthly kingdom they presumed Jesus had come to inaugurate rather than on denying themselves, picking up their cross and follow Jesus to all those on the periphery. We’ve seen it throughout Church history when some have fought more for benefices and sinecures than for the towel to wash others’ feet. We see it in certain segments of the Roman Curia when high-ranking prelates use their positions to try to find spots to advance the career of friends. And we see it in Church institutions — dioceses, parishes, schools, hospitals, charities — that begin to focus all of their efforts on those who are already coming, rather than getting outside of themselves to serve all those for whom Jesus gave his life.
 - “When the Church is self-referent without realizing it,” Cardinal Bergoglio went on to say, “she believes she has her own light. She ceases to be the *mysterium lunae* and gives way to that very great evil which is spiritual worldliness (which according to [the great 20th century

theologian Cardinal Henri De Lubac, is the worst evil that can come upon the Church). The self-referent Church lives to give glory only to one another.”

- Cardinal Bergoglio was saying that when the Church becomes corrupt, spiritually worldly and in need of reform, those in the Church begin to think that the Church gives off her own light, rather than is meant to reflect Christ. The Church ceases to some extent to think, speak, behave and love like Christ, but rather begins to think and speak of herself, as if she is an end in herself. From the parish level to the Vatican Curia, she begins to focus more on her institutional make-up than her Founder, Origin, Guide and Goal.
- The fundamental choice that the Church must make, he said, is whether we are going to be an “evangelizing Church that comes out of herself,” hearing the Word of God and faithfully proclaiming it, or a “worldly Church that lives within herself, of herself, for herself.” That distinction — and the importance of choosing the former — “must give light to the possible changes and reforms that must be made for the salvation of souls.”
- He then gave what he believed were the essential job qualifications for the next pope, qualities that the other cardinals evidently thought he met: “The next pope,” he declared, must be a man who “from the contemplation of Jesus Christ and from worshiping Jesus Christ will help the Church get out of herself and go to those on the outskirts of existence.”
- That is what Pope Francis has been trying to do, going from his intense relationship with Christ out to those on the periphery, kissing children and the handicapped, washing the feet of incarcerated teens, wading into the crowds, calling all types of people on the phone, inviting in for conversations 89-year old newspaper publishers, and more.
- Pope Francis is seeking to lead the entire Church — not only priests and curial officials, but the faithful everywhere — on a spiritual exodus.
- “It’s key that we Catholics, both clergy and laity, go out to meet the people,” he stressed in the 2010 book-length interview, *El Jesuita*. This is “not only because the Church’s mission is to announce the Gospel, but because failing to do so harms us. ... A Church that limits herself to administering parish work, that lives enclosed within a community, experiences what someone in prison does: physical and mental atrophy.” A Church that merely protects its small flock, that gives all or most of its attention to its faithful clientele, he believes, “is a Church that is sick.”
- He’s made the diagnosis and given the prescription the Church needs. Now it’s time for the entire Church to take the medicine that will bring us back to health so that we can go out as ministers of the Divine Physician to heal the world.
- Aparecida Document on the Reevangelization of Central and Latin America
 - He was the chairman of the team of CELAM bishops to put together the 2007 concluding document of the Aparecida Conference, the fifth General Assembly of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, which is one of the most significant documents ever published by the Church. It’s the master plan for the New Evangelization in Latin America.
 - Everyone is called to be a “missionary disciple in communion.” Everywhere is mission territory and everything in the Church is mission-driven. Focused on the encounter with Jesus Christ. It doesn’t blame the problems on money from the North, sheep stealing or other things, but on something missing in the preaching and living of the Gospel among Catholics. The answer is a “permanent catechesis,” an ongoing encounter with Jesus, deepened spiritually through the Bible and the Eucharist.
 - It was, as George Weigel said, a document of a Church that intends to go on “evangelical offense: it will be all Gospel, all proposal, all evangelism, all the time.”
 - It a classic passage it sums up the problem and the response:
 - The church is called to a deep and profound rethinking of its mission and relaunch it with fidelity and boldness in the new circumstances of Latin America and the world. It cannot retreat in response to those who see only confusion, dangers, and threats, or those who seek to cloak the variety and complexity of situations with a mantle of worn-out ideological slogans, or irresponsible attacks. What is required is confirming,

renewing, and revitalizing the newness of the Gospel rooted in our history, out of a personal and community encounter with Jesus Christ that raises up disciples and missionaries. That depends not so much on grand programs and structures, but rather on new men and women who incarnate that tradition and newness, as disciples of Jesus Christ and missionaries of his Kingdom, protagonists of new life for a Latin America that seeks to be rediscovered with the light and power of the Spirit..

- A Catholic faith reduced to mere baggage, to a collection of rules and prohibitions, to fragmented devotional practices, to selective and partial adherence to the truths of faith, to occasional participation in some sacraments, to the repetition of doctrinal principles, to bland or nervous moralizing, that does not convert the life of the baptized would not withstand the trials of time. . . . We must all start again from Christ, recognizing [with Pope Benedict XVI] that “being Christian is . . . the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”
- We Christians must start over from Christ, from contemplation of Him who has revealed to us in his mystery, the complete fulfillment of the human vocation and its meaning. We need to become docile disciples, to learn from Him, in following him, the dignity and fullness of life. We likewise need to be consumed by missionary zeal, to bring to the heart of the culture of our time that unifying and full meaning of human life that neither science, nor politics, nor economics, nor the media can provide. In Christ the Word, God’s Wisdom (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30), culture can again find its center and depth, from which reality may be viewed with all its aspects together, discerning them in the light of the Gospel and granting to each its place and proper dimension.
- The point is to configure disciples to Jesus, the Master, the Way, the Life, by the power of his Holy Spirit, to the acceptance of his commandment to live, to practice the Beatitudes, his own style of life, including sharing his fate, and living as members of his body in communion, nourished by God’s word and the Eucharist.
- It calls consecrated men and women:
 - To be experts in Communion
 - In keeping with their founding charisms of preaching the Gospel to the poor, to bring into being a new generation of disciple and missionary Christians
 - Experts in communion within Church and society
 - Witnesses to the absolute primacy of God and his kingdom in contrast to secularist through evangelical counsels.
 - In our pastoral experience, often sincere people who leave our church do not do so because of what “non-Catholic” groups believe, but fundamentally for what they live; not for doctrinal but for vivential reasons; not for strictly dogmatic and for pastoral reasons, not due to theological problems but to methodological problems of our Church. . They hope to find answers to their concerns. They are seeking, albeit with serious dangers, answers to some aspirations that perhaps they have not found in the Church, as ought to be the case.
- In our Church we should work along four lines:
 - *Religious experience.* In our Church we must offer all our faithful “a personal encounter with Jesus Christ,” a profound and intense religious experience, a *kerygmatic* proclamation and the personal witness of the evangelizers that leads to a personal conversion and to a thorough change of life.
 - *Community life.* Our faithful are seeking Christian communities where they are accepted fraternally and feel valued, visible, and included in the Church. Our faithful must really feel that they are members of an ecclesial community and

stewards of its development. That will allow for greater commitment and self-giving in and for the Church.

- *Biblical and doctrinal formation.* Along with a strong religious experience and notable community life, our faithful need to deepen knowledge of the word of God and the contents of the faith, because that is the only way to bring their religious experience to maturity. Along this strongly experiential and communal path, doctrinal formation is not experienced as theoretical and cold knowledge, but as a fundamental and necessary tool in spiritual, personal and community growth.
- *Missionary commitment of the entire community.* is concerned about their situation so as to attract them once more to the Church and invite them to return to it.
- Necessary aspects of the formation of missionary disciples in communion
 - *The Encounter with Jesus Christ:* Those who will be his disciples are already seeking him (cf. Jn 1:38), but it is the Lord who calls them: “Follow me” (Mk 1:14; Mt 9:9). The deeper meaning of the search must be discovered, and the encounter with Christ that leads to Christian initiation must be fostered. This encounter must be constantly renewed by personal testimony, proclamation of the *kerygma*, and the missionary action of the community. The *kerygma* is not simply a stage, but the leitmotiv of a process that culminates in the maturity of the disciple of Jesus Christ. Without the *kerygma*, the other aspects of this process are condemned to sterility, with hearts not truly converted to the Lord. Only out of the *kerygma* does the possibility of a true Christian initiation occur. Hence, the Church should have it present in all its actions
 - *Conversion:* It is the initial response of those who have listened to the Lord in wonder, who believe in Him through the action of the Spirit, and who decide to be His friend and go with him, changing how they think and live, accepting the cross of Christ, conscious that dying to sin is attaining life. In Baptism and the sacrament of Reconciliation Christ’s Redemption is actualized for us.
 - *Discipleship:* The person constantly matures in knowledge, love, and following of Jesus the master, and delves deeper into the mystery of His person, his example, and his teaching. Ongoing catechesis and sacramental life are of fundamental importance for this stage; they strengthen initial conversion, and enable missionary disciples to persevere in Christian life and mission in the midst of the world that challenges them.
 - *Communion:* There can be no Christian life except in community: in families, parishes, communities of consecrated life, base communities, other small communities, and movements. Like the early Christians who met in community, the disciples take part in the life of the Church, and in the encounter with brothers and sisters, living the love of Christ in solidarity, in fraternal life. They are also accompanied and encouraged by the community and its shepherds as they mature in the live of the Spirit.
 - *Mission:* As they get to know and love their Lord, disciples experience the need to share with others their joy at being sent, at going to the world to proclaim Jesus Christ, dead and risen, to make real the love and service in the person of the neediest, in short, to build the Kingdom of God. Mission is inseparable from discipleship, and hence it must not be understood as a stage subsequent to formation, although it is carried out in different ways, depending on one’s own vocation and on the moment in human and Christian maturation at which the person stands.
- When Pope Francis returned to Brazil for World Youth Day, he had a special session with the leaders of CELAM to focus on following through on the Aparecida

document.

- There he said that the new evangelization is not just a new program but a new paradigm to impact everything the Church is and does. It points to the type of reform he's seeking to do in the Vatican and throughout the Church.
 - The Continental Mission is planned along two lines: the programmatic and the paradigmatic. The programmatic mission, as its name indicates, consists in a series of missionary activities. The paradigmatic mission, on the other hand, involves setting in a missionary key all the day-to-day activities of the Particular Churches. Clearly this entails a whole process of reforming ecclesial structures. The “change of structures” (from obsolete ones to new ones) will not be the result of reviewing an organizational flow chart, which would lead to a static reorganization; rather it will result from the very dynamics of mission. What makes obsolete structures pass away, what leads to a change of heart in Christians, is precisely missionary spirit. Hence the importance of the paradigmatic mission. The Continental Mission, both programmatic and paradigmatic, calls for creating a sense of a Church which is organized to serve all the baptized, and men and women of goodwill. Christ's followers are not individuals caught up in a privatized spirituality, but persons in community, devoting themselves to others. The Continental Mission thus implies membership in the Church.
- He also pondered more how the Church needs to become the mystery of the moon, reflecting Christ's light.
 - The Church is an institution, but when she makes herself a “centre”, she becomes merely functional, and slowly but surely turns into a kind of NGO. The Church then claims to have a light of her own, and she stops being that “mysterium lunae” of which the Church Fathers spoke. She becomes increasingly self-referential and loses her need to be missionary. From an “institution” she becomes a “enterprise”. She stops being a bride and ends up being an administrator; from being a servant, she becomes an “inspector”. Aparecida wanted a Church which is bride, mother and servant, more a facilitator of faith than an inspector of faith.
- And he describes the need for a Church that is close to the people and facilitates the encounter of people with Christ:
 - In Aparecida, two pastoral categories stand out; they arise from the uniqueness of the Gospel, and we can employ them as guidelines for assessing how we are living missionary discipleship in the Church: nearness and encounter. Neither of these two categories is new; rather, they are the way God has revealed himself to us in history. He is the “God who is near” to his people, a nearness which culminates in the incarnation. He is the God who goes forth to meet his people. In Latin America and the Caribbean there are pastoral plans that are “distant”, disciplinary pastoral plans which give priority to principles, forms of conduct, organizational procedures... and clearly lack nearness, tenderness, a warm touch. They do not take into account the “revolution of tenderness” brought by the incarnation of the Word. There are pastoral plans designed with such a dose of distance that they are incapable of sparking an encounter: an encounter with Jesus Christ, an encounter with our brothers and sisters. Such pastoral plans can at best provide a dimension of proselytism, but they can never inspire people to feel part of or belong to the Church.

Nearness creates communion and belonging; it makes room for encounter. Nearness takes the form of dialogue and creates a culture of encounter. One touchstone for measuring whether a pastoral plan embodies nearness and a capacity for encounter is the homily. What are our homilies like? Do we imitate the example of our Lord, who spoke “as one with authority”, or are they simply moralizing, detached, abstract?

- He put all of these thoughts — from Aparecida and from his address to the Cardinals in the General Congregation — in his interactions with the multitudes when he was in Brazil. He demonstrated for us what the New Evangelization looked like.
 - In his trip to Brazil for World Youth Day, Pope Francis did far more than energize Latin American Catholics and young people from around the world enthusiastically to embrace and live the Catholic faith. He tried to model the way the Church needs to carry out the New Evangelization.
 - In a remarkable half-hour interview with Brazil’s O Globo Television Network, Pope Francis was asked why he believed so many Brazilian Catholics have been leaving the Church either for Pentecostal groups or abandoning Christianity altogether. After humbly admitting that he didn’t know all the details of the Brazilian situation, he said he wondered if there were parallels to the situation that happened in his native Argentina that he knew much better. In fact, his words apply to most countries that have experienced a hemorrhaging of practicing Catholics precipitating a need for a new evangelization.
 - “For me,” he said in Spanish, “the fundamental thing is the closeness of the Church. The Church is a mother and neither you nor I are familiar with mothers who relate to their children by correspondence. A mother shows affection, embraces, kisses, loves. When the Church, occupied by so many things neglects this closeness and communicates only with documents, she’s like a mother who communicates with her children only by letter.”
 - What he was describing is that in many places bishops have written pastoral letters and pastors beautiful bulletin columns for their people, but they haven’t left their offices to go to the peripheries where people are and embrace them and their problems, show them love and affection and accompaniment up close. Perhaps this is because their dioceses and parishes are geographically enormous. Perhaps it’s because these shepherds are pitifully introverted and timid. Regardless, Pope Francis is saying that this is one of the chief reasons for the exodus.
 - Catholics, he implied, haven’t been experiencing enough the proximity of the Church. When a Pentecostal preacher opens up a storefront Church in their neighborhood and comes and knocks at their homes to pray with them, people are drawn by a version of Christianity near to them. Or otherwise Catholics, convinced that the Church their mother is distant and cold to them and disconnected from their daily life, just stop practicing Christianity altogether.
 - Pope Francis’ main objective in Brazil was to show this “maternal closeness” of the Church. He went out into the crowds, kissed hundreds of babies, embraced young people who ran up to him, journeyed into the shantytowns and even individual homes, and in short enfolded and modeled the affectionate, personal love of a mother.
 - When Pope Francis spoke to the Brazilian bishops and all the other prelates present in Rio on the same day he gave the television interview, he deepened his analysis of the causes of people abandoning the Church and also sketched the solution.
 - He stressed that all of us in the Church needed to ponder very deeply and emulate Jesus’ on the Road to Emmaus.
 - In Emmaus, Jesus encountered two dejected disciples abandoning Jerusalem. They had placed their hopes in Jesus only to be scandalized and humiliated by his crucifixion. Jesus

met them on the road leading downward from Jerusalem and entered into their conversation concerning recent events. He didn't stop them in their tracks but rather accompanied them, trying to shed light on what they had observed and what they had obviously missed. He made their hearts burn as he spoke to them on the way, such that they begged him to stay with them longer. When Jesus celebrated the Eucharist for them in their home, they recognized him, and left with enthusiasm to run miles in darkness up the mountain to Jerusalem to share the news of Jesus with others.

- Pope Francis said that today many are wandering on roads away from everything “Jerusalem” signifies, namely, “Scripture, catechesis, sacraments, community, friendship with the Lord, Mary and the apostles.” They had placed their hopes in the Christ the Church was offering, only to find disappointment.
 - “Perhaps,” the Pope said, “the Church appeared too weak, perhaps too distant from their needs, perhaps too poor to respond to their concerns, perhaps too cold, perhaps too caught up with itself, perhaps a prisoner of its own rigid formulas, perhaps the world seems to have made the Church a relic of the past, unfit for new questions, perhaps the Church could speak to people in their infancy but not to those come of age.”
 - Regardless, they're walking away into the night, seeking someone or something else in which to place their hopes.
 - The Pope says that the Church must be capable, like Christ, of “going forth into their night, ... meeting them on their way, ... [and] entering into their conversation.”
 - The Church has to do more than walk at their side and listen to them. The Church needs to be able “to make sense of the ‘night’ contained in the flight of so many of our brothers and sisters from Jerusalem — a Church that realizes that the reasons why people leave also contain reasons why they can eventually return.”
 - More than anything, he stressed, the Church, like Jesus, needs to be capable of “warming hearts,” of addressing the “disappointments present in their hearts” and show how they are mysteriously part of the redemption.
 - “Are we still a Church capable of warming hearts?” Pope Francis asked, challenging the bishops and the whole Church. Warming hearts is a precondition to leading people wandering in the night of disappointment and brokenness back to Jerusalem.
 - For Pope Francis, the road to Rio was the Road to Emmaus. With great maternal tenderness, Christ's vicar went to warm hearts, to accompany pilgrims along the way, so that, in rediscovering Christ and the brilliance of his light, they might run to Jerusalem and tell everyone that Christ is more alive than ever. He's calling the whole Church to enter that same Emmaus journey.
- The final aspect of the New Evangelization that Pope Francis is trying to teach us all came in his interview with the Jesuit publications, in which he talked more about the method of the new evangelization.
 - “I see clearly,” the pope declared in the interview, “that the thing the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the church as a field hospital after battle. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then we can talk about everything else. Heal the wounds. Heal the wounds.... And you have to start from the ground up.”
 - The first thing the Church needs to do, Pope Francis insists, is to assess the most basic wounds a person has and try to help bring them to the Lord for healing. Until those lesions are mended, they're in general not going to be receptive to a conversation about anything else, especially how their moral behavior in other areas may be wounding them even further.
 - The Pope recognizes that there are many who are deeply wounded in their relationship with the Church, who feel that they bear invisible scarlet letters because of sins or

irregular situations. They feel judged, rather than embraced, by those in the Church, that their sins are hated more than they're loved.

- In short, they believe that many in the Church relate to them more as the older brother than the father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. We know that the worst sin of the Prodigal Son was not the life of debauchery but relating to the Father as if he were dead or simply a slave owner. Likewise the first and biggest wound that needs to be healed is not a particular sinful behavior but a person's overall relationship to God and to his family the Church.
- The Church is supposed to be a great hospital of souls, but many think that hospital is closed to them, or that the cost of care is too high.
- That's why Pope Francis is calling all Catholics to be "ministers of mercy above all." This mercy does not mean overlooking serious sins, but it also means not obsessing about them.
- The Pope stressed that laxism and rigorism are both false mercies because "neither of them really takes responsibility for the person. The rigorist washes his hands so that he leaves it to the commandment. The loose minister washes his hands by simply saying, 'This is not a sin' or something like that."
- He says that true ministers of mercy "take responsibility for the people and accompany them like the Good Samaritan, who washes, cleans and raises up his neighbor. This is pure Gospel. God is greater than sin."
- The Pope is the Church's prime minister of mercy. He is neither a rigorist or, as many in the media are pretending, a laxist. He's rather a Good Samaritan caring for sinners and not just their sins, trying to help them grasp that, no matter what they've done, God is greater than sin, his mercy is greater than their misery.
- He's one who lives by his papal motto, *Miserando atque Eligendo*, and wants all Catholics to remember that Christ came to call sinners and he calls them precisely through his mercy.
- With words and example, Pope Francis is trying to change not only the perception of the Church but the attitude of all those in the Church with regard to those who need mercy most. "The first reform must be the attitude," he says, so that everyone can perceive the Church as a mother who loves rather than disowns those in need of help.
- That change in attitude must also impact how the Church communicates our faith.
- First, in terms of location, the Pope states we need to "proclaim the Gospel on every street corner," not just within our churches.
- Second, it must be "the good news of the kingdom and healing," not a "transmission of a disjointed multitude of doctrines [that] although relevant, on their own do not show the heart of the message of Jesus." Rather our preaching must focus on the "essentials," the kerygma, the "proclamation of salvation" that "fascinates and attracts" and "makes the heart burn."
- That means it must preach, with words and witness, that Jesus loves us and wishes to help and save us the same way he transformed sinners like Peter and Matthew, Mary Magdalene and the woman caught in adultery, Zacchaeus and the Good Thief.
- The Pope grasps that without this life-changing relationship with Jesus, many will never grasp how the most countercultural parts of Church teaching are actually part of the Good News and the truth that sets us free. Without the power that comes from the merciful love of God and the life of faith, many won't have the strength to eliminate behavior incompatible with the Gospel.
- While it may seem that the Pope is making a mess — what he says is the job description of prophets — what he is actually trying to do is to clean up the mess of sin by making the waves of Christ's mercy flow. Rather than neglecting the great spiritual cancers of our age, he's seeking to make the Church ever more a great hospital for wounded souls. That's what we're all called to do in the New Evangelization.

- Conclusions
 - For the Church as a whole to rediscover its maternal warmth, to draw close with love, to care patiently for the wounds of people, it's obvious how important are religious women. Religious women are the ones who have always taught the Church — and particularly the men of the Church — how to love in these ways. That's why John Paul II said that the new evangelization is inconceivable without the renewed participation of women religious, renewed precisely in the warmth of their own faith. That's what we pray for today and moving forward!