

# HOLINESS & EVANGELIZATION

THE BEATITUDES (Matt5:1-12)

Fr. Dan Abba

# MYSTAGOGY

- ▣ Literally, mystagogy means leading those who have been initiated into a mystery into its deeper meaning and significance for their lives.
- ▣ The early church appropriated it to refer to
  - What they did during the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost when they were leading new converts into a deeper appreciation of the sacred mysteries they had experienced (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) as it related to their lives and their deaths.

# MYSTAGOGY

- ▣ In the sacramental actions, the Church does and wills what Christ does and wills;
  - are commissioned by Christ to bring all people to Him.
- ▣ We share our knowledge of the mystery of Christ with others

# HOLINESS

- ▣ Holiness is more than just clean living.
- ▣ Holiness is a relationship with God.
- ▣ If I am holy, I belong to God.
- ▣ The life that emerges will therefore be holy.
- ▣ Holiness, or sanctification is not ME being a better person – it is Christ living through me.
- ▣ It is a sharing in the life of Christ.
- ▣ It is the putting off of the old man of Adam and sin and the putting on of the new man, Jesus Christ who is the perfect man.

# WHO IS CALLED TO HOLINESS?

God has called everyone to be holy

“For this is the will of God, your  
sanctification”

1 Thes. 4:3

But we have to want it.

# WHO IS CALLED TO HOLINESS?

- ▣ THIS MEANS – THE SACRAMENTS:
  - **Baptism:** a Sacrament of Faith; a commitment to a way of life
  - **Confirmation:** the promise of Christ to send the Holy Spirit (Jn14:16) who will bear witness to Christ and will enable those who receive the Spirit to bear witness also (Jn15:26).
  - **Eucharist:** gathers us together as a community of God to share in the life of Christ.
- ▣ meritorious good works
- ▣ prayer

# SACRAMENTS

- ▣ Sacraments are sensible signs instituted by Christ to bestow grace on those who receive them.
- ▣ If you belong to Christ, you are here to both **become an expression of the will of Christ**, which is what it means to be a witness, and you are here to **DO the will of Christ**. Here we see the outworking of what it means to be **SANCTIFIED**.

# SANCTIFIED (OR TO BE MADE HOLY)

To be **SANCTIFIED** – or made HOLY ultimately means to **come under the will of God**, or, if you will, the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

This will obviously result in a **holy life of obedience**. But not only will I DO the will of God, but also if I belong to God, I will **BECOME the will of God**. In other words, I will become a living epistle – **a living expression of His will**.



# SANCTIFIED – MADE HOLY

So whoever is in Christ is a

**new creation:**

the old things have passed away;  
behold, new things have come.

(2 Cor 5:17)

# SANCTIFIED – MADE HOLY

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because he has anointed me  
to bring glad tidings to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind ,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.

Lk 4: 18-19

# EVANGELIZATION

- ▣ *EVANGELIZATION* (Greek-euangelizomai)
  - *to bring or to proclaim the Euangelion: the Good News*
- ▣ *To evangelize:*
  - *to testify; to proclaim the mystery of God's Salvation.*

*Like Jesus, we have been sent to proclaim the good news.*

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,  
Baptizing them in the name of the Father  
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
and teaching them to obey everything  
that I have commanded you.”*

Matt. 28: 19-20

# EVANGELIZATION

- ▣ In addition to telling His disciples to wait for the Spirit to empower them, Jesus explained what the Spirit's power would accomplish:

“...you will receive **power** when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon you, and you will be **my witnesses** in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”

(Acts 1:8)

# EVANGELIZATION

Even as the Spirit came upon Jesus in His baptism to anoint Him for preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, so the Spirit empowers us to spread the good news about Jesus. Notice that the content of our good news is a revised version of Jesus' own message:

- Whereas He proclaimed the coming of God's reign,
- we bear witness to Jesus Himself, to what He accomplished in His life, death, and resurrection.

# EVANGELIZATION

We have the **privilege** of announcing to people that Jesus died for their sins so that they might be **reconciled** to God and therefore live forever under God's reign, **both in this life and in the life to come**.

Our good news is more than: "You can go to heaven when you die."

It is "You can be **reconciled to God right now**. You can begin to experience true fellowship with the God by living under God's reign because of what Jesus has done for you" (see 2 Cor 5:16-21).

# EVANGELIZATION

## how shall we do this?

In fact it's much simpler and less scary than it might seem. Are you ready for one key to proclaiming the good news of Jesus?

Here is it: *Just be honest!*

*Just be yourself!* Talking with people about Jesus doesn't depend upon your mastery of a sales pitch. In fact, the less you "sell" Jesus the better. But as you honestly share your life, your convictions, your hopes, even your doubts and fears, with those around you; the good news will inevitably and naturally emerge. Refer to the Beatitudes.



# EVANGELIZATION

## what can we do?

Five Steps for evangelization (based on Pope Paul VI  
Apostolic Exhortation on evangelization in the  
Modern World)



1. Witness Christ: by living lives that witness our faith in Christ;
2. Share your Faith: what does it mean to be Catholic?
3. Offer the option for love
4. Challenge our Culture: upsetting values, lines of thought and models of life that contradict the word of God and the plan of salvation.
5. Make the good better: “culture must be regenerated by an encounter with the gospel”.



# SUGGESTIONS FOR EVANGELIZATION

- ▣ PRAY
  - Take steps to KNOW those in need of evangelization
- ▣ LISTEN
- ▣ BIBLE SHARING
- ▣ INVITE PEOPLE
- ▣ ADULT DISCUSSION GROUP
- ▣ VOLUNTEER
- ▣ VISIT