

TREASURES of OUR FAITH

by: Deacon Ryan Adams

Greetings brothers and sisters. As we go through this 'Year of Faith', each week we will take a journey together to deepen and rediscover our faith as Catholic Christians. We will take time to look at the rich traditions of our Church, we'll look at what certain things signify and their symbolism, take time to answer some frequently asked questions and look at why we do certain things as Catholics. This week we'll look at Evangelization.

Evangelization lives at the core of the Church's identity. Evangelization brings the good news of the Gospel to all who seek the life-giving message of faith in Jesus Christ.

The Church is missionary by her very nature. Her mission is to proclaim the salvation of Christ to the ends of the earth. Catholic evangelization is deeply rooted in Scripture, in the very person of Jesus Christ, in the examples of His words, works and His ministry.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines evangelization as: *"the proclamation of Christ and His Gospel by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ's command."*

Evangelization means bringing the good news of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself. Catholic

Evangelization has three primary goals:

To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely want to share it with others.

To invite all people in the world, whatever their social or cultural background, to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic Faith. To foster Gospel values in our society, promoting the dignity of the human person, the importance of the family and the common good of all our societies, so that our world may continue to be transformed by the saving love and power of Jesus Christ.

Each one of us in virtue of our baptism is called to live out our faith and to bear witness to the Gospel. The New Evangelization calls each of us to deepen our faith, believe in the Gospel message and to go forth to proclaim the Gospel. The focus of the New Evangelization calls all Catholics to be evangelized and then go forth to evangelize. The New Evangelization invites each Catholic to renew their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. Here are just a few key examples we are called to live out and help to strengthen our call to evangelize;

Personal Relationship with Christ: our Christian life must be defined and motivated first and foremost by a personal love of Jesus Christ.

Personal Relationship with the Church: The Church is the Body of Christ, Our lives must be defined and motivated by a deep personal love and service of the Church.

Living Morally: Our moral behavior must be lived out as a Christian, as children of God. How we live in our daily lives—in our personal relations, in our actions, what we say, in our social attitudes, all must be marked by Christian values, that is..., 'saintly values'.

Prayer: It is through prayer that we learn to know God, it's how we build on our relationship, how we keep it strong and alive, where we discern God's will and call.

Charitable Works: Works of charity are a spiritual discipline and an example of our love of God and neighbor.

A quote from Pope Francis, "May you be true evangelizers! May your initiatives be 'bridges', means of bringing others to Christ, so as to journey together with him. And in this spirit may you always be attentive to charity. Each individual Christian and every community is missionary to the extent that they bring to others and live the Gospel, and testify to God's love for all, especially those experiencing difficulties."