

Mission-Oriented Parishes

At the end of every celebration of the Eucharist, the deacon or priest dismisses the community with a deliberate command: “The Mass is ended. Go in peace.” We might hear instead, “Go forth, proclaiming the Gospel by the way you live.” Through these or similar words, we are sent into the world to transform it, just as we are transformed by the word of God and the Eucharist we receive in each celebration. This is the means by which the Church achieves its goal that we, as intentional disciples of Jesus, make new disciples for Jesus.

“Evangelization takes place in the obedience to the missionary mandate of Jesus: ‘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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you’ (Mt 28:19-20). ... The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration” (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 19, 28).

The word ‘evangelization’ comes from the same root as the word for the Gospel (evangelium), also called the Good News. Those who hear that word of God – the Good News – are then called to proclaim that message of salvation to others. This is what recent popes, from Blessed Paul VI to St. John Paul II to Benedict XVI to Francis, all call the “missionary dynamic” of a parish: an outward missionary thrust to bring others to Christ while transforming the world, with the inward strengthening of individual members for the mission.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL WE PROCLAIM?

1. That Jesus revealed God as a **Trinity of persons**: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, calling us into relationship;
2. That Jesus died in his human body **for our salvation** – for the forgiveness of sins – but rose from the dead to restore that human body and all human nature;
3. That he **established the Church** to spread this Good News and to continue his work of salvation;
4. That he gave us **seven sacraments** to celebrate and share his life, and to continue his work of healing in the world;
5. That through our Baptism we have a **share in his divine life**; and
6. That in all this, we have the hope and the **promise of eternal life** with God in heaven.



AS MEMBERS OF A MISSION-ORIENTED PARISH WE...

- ✓ experience, in each Mass, a renewal of the faith we proclaim and a renewal of our personal relationship with God that brought us there in the first place;
- ✓ accept the invitation to experience anew this real encounter with Christ – not just each week in the Eucharist, but each day of our lives;
- ✓ celebrate this encounter, as well, in the sacraments;
- ✓ follow that decisive direction Jesus gives us that will lead us to truly making a difference in our world in service of God and others;
- ✓ experience the true peace and joy that comes only from knowing Emmanuel – God with us; and
- ✓ desire to share the Gospel with others so they, too, can be disciples of Jesus.



“In virtue of their baptism, all members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (see Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients”

(Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 120).

Watch for part 5 coming soon: “The Role of the Faithful”