



THE BATTLE OVER CATECHESIS

- Bishop David Walker Liaison between the RCIA National Committee and the Australian Bishops' Conference.
- Asking for funding between \$ 15,000 and \$ 20.000.
- The decision was not made. Why?
- The battle over catechesis
- A battle beyond RCIA, extending to R.E. teaching in Catholic schools, the teaching of theology in Theological Colleges, the formation of Pastoral co-workers, the preparation of children for the sacraments, etc. etc.
- What is the battle all about?

INSTRUCTIONAL v. EXPERIENTIAL CATECHESIS

- The battle between Instructional/Doctrinal Catechesis v. Ongoing Experiential Catechesis.
- Are they mutually exclusive?
- The RCIA "their hearts opened by the Holy Spirit" (RCIA 36) But also instructional catechesis (RCIA 78)
- Is a meeting point possible?
- Is there a methodology, a praxis which guarantees both Instructional Catechesis and Ongoing Experiential catechesis?
- Elio's quest: What is the balancing principle?
- Enter Pope Francis.

Pope Francis: **A NEW FACE... A NEW DIRECTION**

Pope Francis: **UNTIL IT IS IRREVERSIBLE**

Oscar Rodriguez: **A LONG JOURNEY**

Oscar Rodriguez: **TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH, YOUR HOLINESS.**





LAUDATO SI': OUR COMMON HOME

- St Francis reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. LS 1

SYMPTOMS OF SICKNESS

- **The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life.**
- ... We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (Gen, 2:7); **our very bodies are made up of her elements**; we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. LS 2

WORLD A SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

- As Christians, we are also called **“to accept the world as a sacrament of communion**, as a way of sharing with God and our neighbours on a global scale. It is our humble conviction that **the divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of God’s creation, in the last speck of dust of our planet”**. LS 9

THE PRECIOUS BOOK OF CREATION

- 85. God has written a precious book, “whose letters are the multitude of created things present in the universe”.^[54] The Canadian bishops rightly pointed out that no creature is excluded from this manifestation of God: “From panoramic vistas to the tiniest living form, nature is a constant source of wonder and awe. It is also a continuing revelation of the divine”.^[55]
- The bishops of Japan, for their part, made a thought-provoking observation: “To sense each creature singing the hymn of its existence is to live joyfully in God’s love and hope”.^[56] This contemplation of creation allows us to discover in each thing a teaching which God wishes to hand on to us, since “for the believer, to contemplate creation is to hear a message, to listen to a paradoxical and silent voice”.^[57]
- We can say that “alongside revelation properly so-called, contained in sacred Scripture, there is a divine manifestation in the blaze of the sun and the fall of night”.^[58] Paying attention to this manifestation, we learn to see ourselves in relation to all other creatures: “I express myself in expressing the world; in my effort to decipher the sacredness of the world, I explore my own”.^[59] LS 85

QUOTES TO LAUDATO SI’ no 85

- ^[54] JOHN PAUL II, *Catechesis* (30 January 2002),6: *Insegnamenti* 25/1 (2002), 140.
- ^[55] CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION, Pastoral Letter *You Love All that Exists... All Things are Yours, God, Lover of Life* (4 October 2003), 1.
- ^[56] CATHOLIC BISHOPS’ CONFERENCE OF JAPAN, *Reverence for Life. A Message for the Twenty-First Century* (1 January 2000), 89.
- ^[57] JOHN PAUL II, *Catechesis* (26 January 2000), 5: *Insegnamenti* 23/1 (2000), 123.
- ^[58] ID., *Catechesis* (2 August 2000), 3: *Insegnamenti* 23/2 (2000), 112.
- ^[59] PAUL RICOEUR, *Philosophie de la Volonté, t. II: Finitude et Culpabilité*, Paris, 2009, 216.

REVELATION BOUND IN TWO VOLUMES

- Creation is the first Bible, the ‘precious book’ referred to here by the Pope in Laudato Si.
- God has been speaking since the Big Ban 13.7 billion years ago.
- “Revelation comes bound in two volumes,” wrote Thomas Aquinas, “the Book of Creation and the Book of Scriptures.”
- God walks to meet us with two pairs of shoes, you might say, the shoes of nature and the shoes of the man Jesus.
- The French philosopher Paul Ricoeur tells of his intense relationship, even unity with the divine heart of the universe.

GOD INCARNATES IN THE COSMOS

“God incarnates in the cosmos. He and his incarnations are inseparably connected with one another.

He is not in his incarnation; He manifests himself as incarnation.

He reveals himself in the tree as tree, in the animal as animal, in the person as person, in the angel as angel.

They are not creatures in addition to which there is a God who slips into them. God is each and every one of these creatures and yet is not them, since God never exhausts himself in any single creature, but is always all the others as well.

It is precisely this that is the experience of the mystic.

The mystic apprehends the cosmos as the meaningful manifestation of God.”

Paul Ricoeur, *Philosophie de la Volente*, 1960, p. 216

GOD PENETRATING EVERY CORNER OF CREATION

- Brother Carlo Carretto also calls on the experiences of nature to express his sense of spiritual awakening:
- “The moment when God’s love penetrated every corner of my being and filtered through my being like sun through the leaves of a forest. I feel immersed in God like a drop in the ocean, like a star in the immensity of light, like a lark in the summer, like a fish in the sea. Most of all, like a child in its mother’s lap.”
- Quoted in Daniel O’Leary, *An Astonishing Secret*, p. 98-99

THE CREATION ACCOUNTS

LS 66.

The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality.

They suggest that **human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships:**

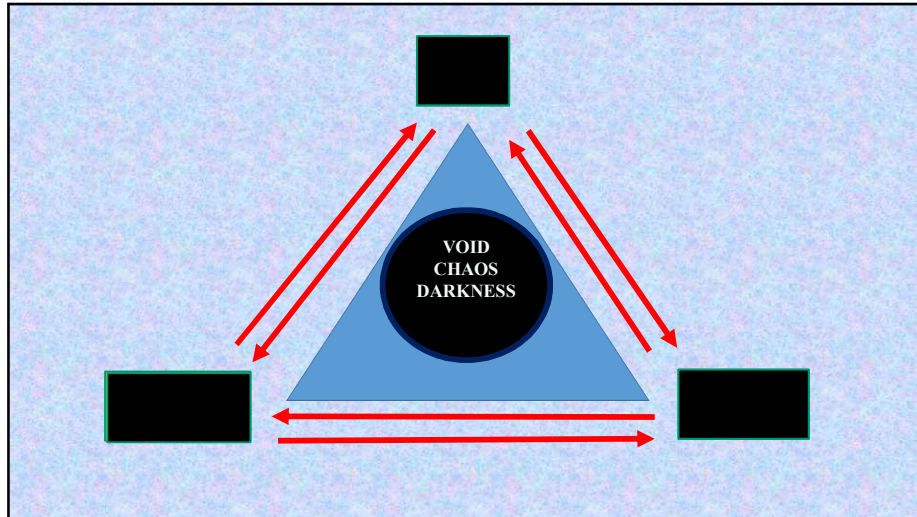
- with God,
- with our neighbour
- and with the earth itself.

THE CREATION ACCOUNTS

- 66. The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that **human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself.**
- According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us.
- This rupture is sin.
- The harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation as a whole was disrupted by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge our creaturely limitations.
- This in turn distorted our mandate to “have dominion” over the earth (cf. *Gen 1:28*), to “till it and keep it” (*Gen 2:15*). As a result, the originally harmonious relationship between human beings and nature became conflictual (cf. *Gen 3:17-19*).
- It is significant that the harmony which Saint Francis of Assisi experienced with all creatures was seen as a healing of that rupture.
- Saint Bonaventure held that, through universal reconciliation with every creature, Saint Francis in some way returned to the state of original innocence.^[40] This is a far cry from our situation today, where sin is manifest in all its destructive power in wars, the various forms of violence and abuse, the abandonment of the most vulnerable, and attacks on nature.

WE ARE NOT GODS

- 67. We are not God.
- The earth was here before us and it has been given to us.
- This allows us to respond to the charge that Judaeo-Christian thinking, on the basis of the Genesis account which grants man “dominion” over the earth (cf. *Gen 1:28*), has encouraged the unbridled exploitation of nature by painting him as domineering and destructive by nature.
- This is not a correct interpretation of the Bible as understood by the Church. Although it is true that we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures.
- The biblical texts are to be read in their context ...



GOD IN ALL THINGS

The day of my spiritual awakening
was the day I saw,
and knew I saw, all things in God
and God in all things.
Metchtild of Magdeburg

THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS

- MARK NO GENEALOGY
- MATTHEW ABRAHAM
- LUKE ADAM AND EVE
- JOHN IN THE BEGINNING

**AND HERE IT IS!
THE MEETING POINT BETWEEN
INSTRUCTIONAL AND
EXPERIENTIAL CATECHESIS.**

**INCARNATION AND CREATION AS
THE STARTING POINT**

TOWARDS A NEW INCARNATIONAL DIRECTION

1. AN INCARNATIONAL APPROACH TO CATECHESIS
2. AN INCARNATIONAL METHODOLOGY OF CATECHESIS
3. AN INCARNATIONAL CONTENT OF CATECHESIS

1. AN INCARNATIONAL APPROACH TO CATECHESIS

The First Action of the Catechist/Missionary

The first action of the catechist/ missionary must be **to enter** into the lives of the people among whom she/he lives;
to experience their daily struggles for survival;
to share their pain and their celebrations;
to be in touch with their experience of God
and to discover some of the myriad ways that **God's spirit** is already at work there.

Adapted from notes of Michael Amaladoss SJ

JESUS, THE GOD OF THE INCARNATION

- The first action of the missionary must be to enter into the lives of the people among whom she/he lives
- to experience their daily struggles for survival; to share their pain and their celebrations
- **Why?**
- Because this is how God, through the Incarnation, has already entered the life of every human being.
- **God was present before the missionary arrived!!!**

What is Mission?

Mission is **God's turning towards the world** in creative love, redemptive healing and transforming power.

This turning takes place **in ordinary history** and is **not confined to the activity of the Church**.

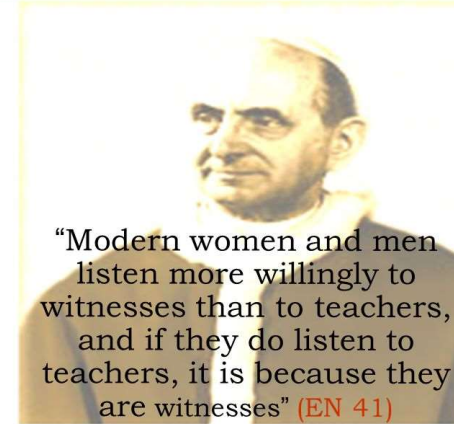
WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

Who is the primary missionary?

What is the role of the community?



MISSION AS WITNESS



"Modern women and men listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if they do listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses" (EN 41)

Participating in God's Mission

When we recognise that our mission is not a matter of taking over from God but participating in God's mission, we are brought to see our primary challenge as essentially one of **contemplation**.

Contemplative Missionaries

Missionary work is born in contemplation.

A missionary must

recognise

and **discern**

the ways in which God **has been active and present** among the people,

before he/she arrived.

An encounter with a mystery

Mission is an encounter with a mystery: the mystery of a **missionary God** whose love embraces the world and all its inhabitants and all its creatures.

To encounter this mystery we need

to look,
to contemplate,
to discern,
to listen,
to learn,
to respond
to collaborate.

Listening and Discernment

In this **listening and discernment**, missionaries will help to bring the people they serve to a **clearer awareness of God's loving concern for them** and **for every aspect of their lives.**

The Church's Mission

"The Church's mission in the service of the Kingdom has three essential, inter-related dimensions:

- 1) **Human liberation**
- 2) **Inculturation**
- 3) **Inter-religious dialogue."**

Michael Amaldadoss SJ

DUCKWHISTLE POLITICS.

In every human being
 Is something we're not seeing
 Down there in the muck
 It is the inner duck!

So blow the duckwhistle gently
 At least you can blow it mentally
 And what you thought was lacking
 Will gladly rise up quacking

And with this joyful meekness
 And rounded yellow beakness
 So beautifully unfurled,
 Go out and love the world!



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2. AN INCARNATIONAL METHODOLOGY

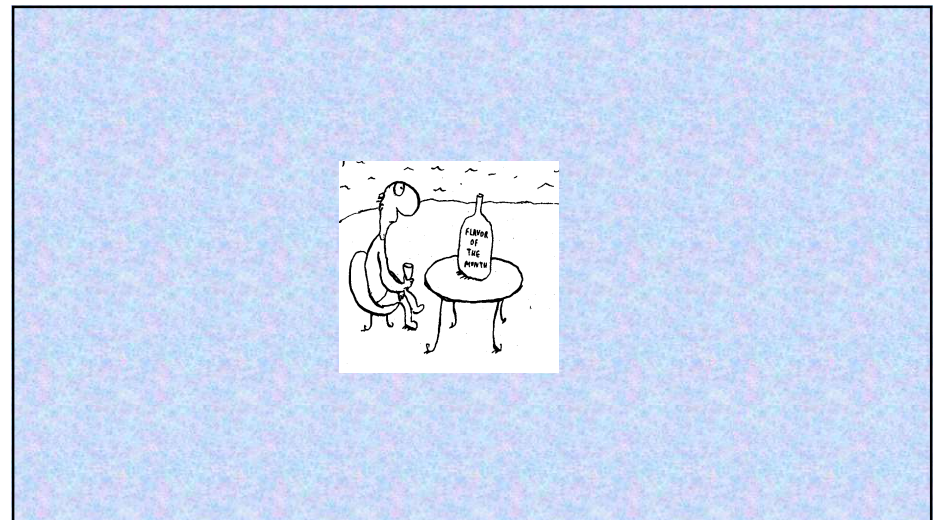
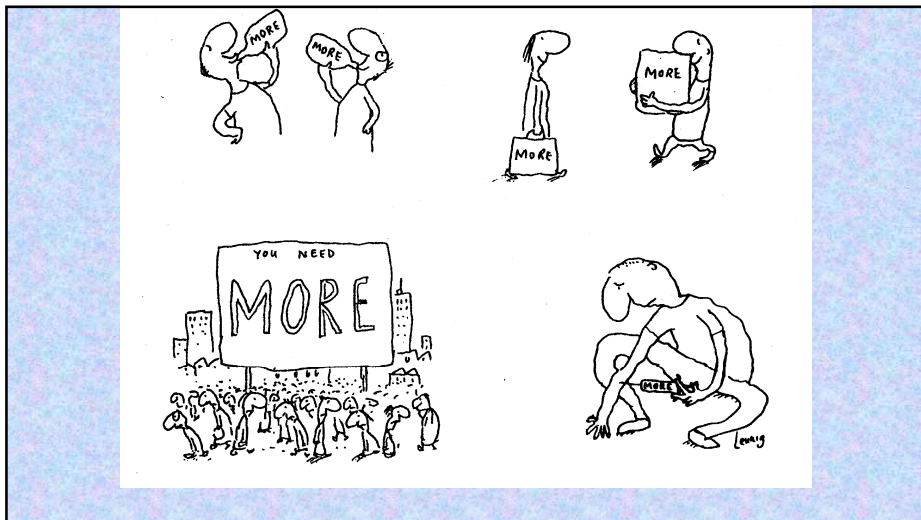
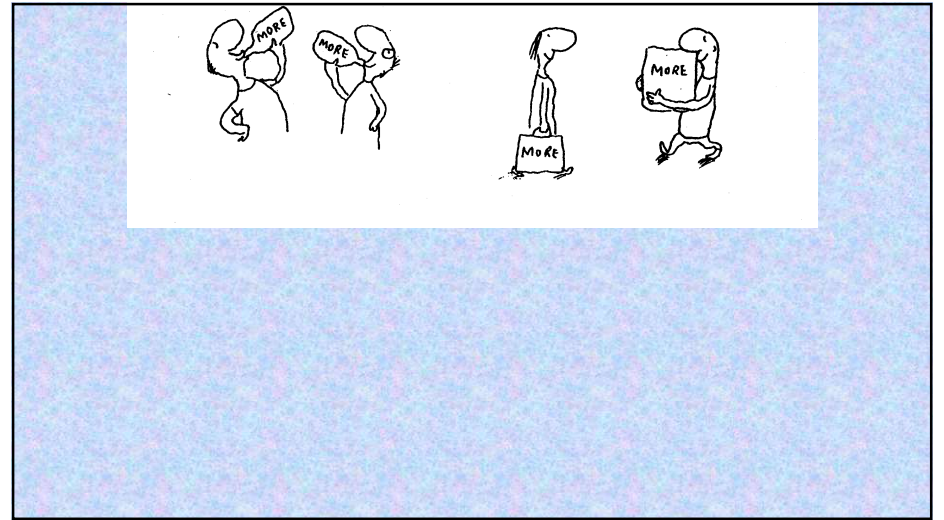
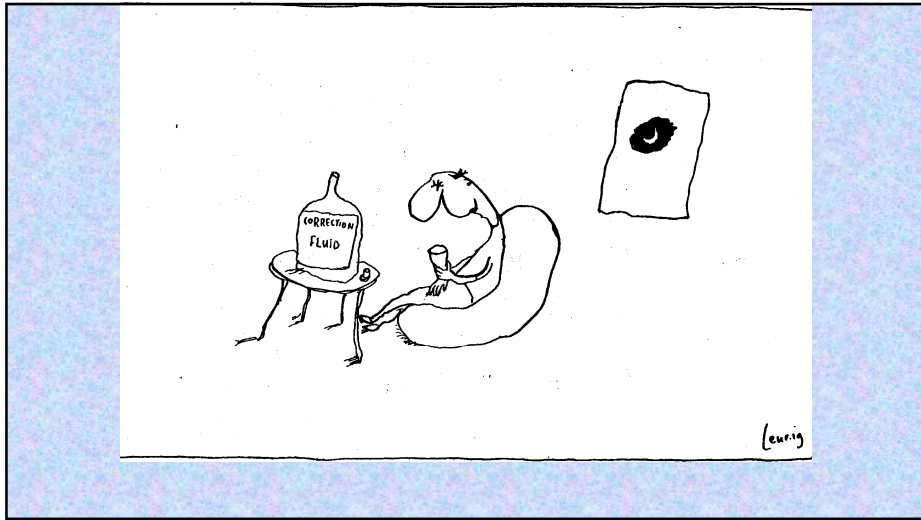


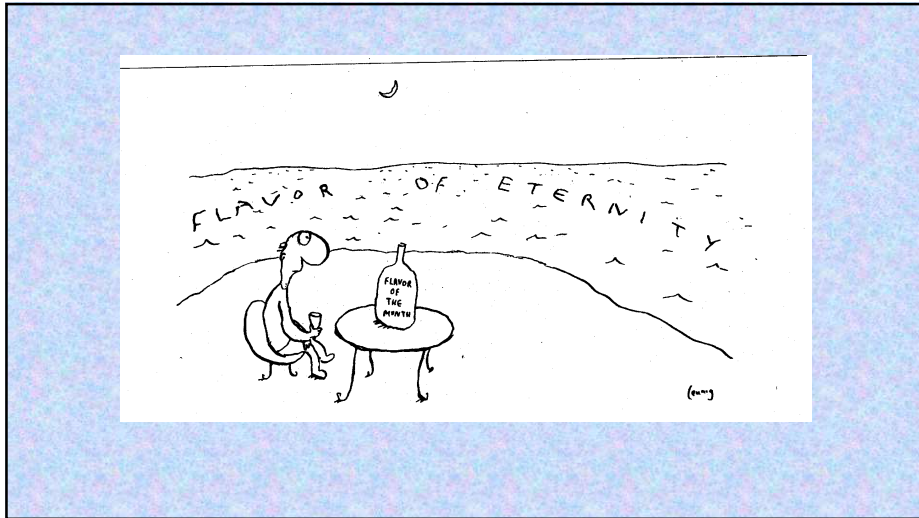
THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

1. THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.

Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness.

With Christ joy is constantly born anew.





3. AN INCARNATIONAL CONTENT

CATECHESIS IN *'The Joy of the Gospel'*, 163-168

CATECHESIS

163. Education and catechesis are at the service of this growth. We already possess a number of magisterial documents and aids on catechesis issued by the Holy See and by various episcopates.

I think in particular of the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979), the *General Catechetical Directory* (1997) and other documents whose contents need not be repeated here.

I would like to offer a few brief considerations which I believe to be of particular significance.

Kerygmatic, mystagogical and moral catechesis

1. KERYGMATIC CATECHESIS
2. MYSTAGOGICAL CATECHESIS
3. MORAL CATECHESIS

1. KERYGMATIC CATECHESIS

164. In catechesis too, we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or kerygma, which needs to be **the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal.**

The kerygma is trinitarian.

The fire of the Spirit is given in the form of tongues and leads us to **believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father's infinite mercy.**

On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: **"Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you."** (cont.) ...

... (164 cont.) This first proclamation is called "first" not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things.

It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the *principal* proclamation, the one which

we must hear *again and again*

in *different ways,*

the one which we must announce one way or another *throughout the process of catechesis,*

at every level

and moment.[\[126\]](#)

For this reason too, "the priest – like every other member of the Church – ought to grow in awareness that **he himself is continually in need of being evangelized**".[\[127\]](#)

On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over:
“Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.”

165. We must not think that in catechesis the kerygma gives way to a supposedly more “solid” formation. Nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful and wisdom-filled than that initial proclamation.

All Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the kerygma, which is reflected in and constantly illumines, the work of catechesis, thereby enabling us to understand more fully the significance of every subject which the latter treats.

It is the message **capable of responding to the desire for the infinite which abides in every human heart.** ... (cont.)

... (165 con.) The centrality of the kerygma calls for stressing those elements which are most needed today:

it has to express God’s saving love which precedes any moral and religious obligation on our part;
it should not impose the truth but appeal to freedom;
it should be marked by joy, encouragement, liveliness and a harmonious balance which will not reduce preaching to a few doctrines which are at times more philosophical than evangelical.

All this demands on the part of the evangelizer certain attitudes which foster openness to the message: approachability, readiness for dialogue, patience, a warmth and welcome which is non-judgmental.

THE QUALITIES OF THE CONTENT:

JOY
ENCOURAGEMENT
LIVELINESS
HARMONIOUS BALANCE

**THE QUALITIES OF THE
CATECHIST:**

**APPROACHABILITY
READINESS FOR DIALOGUE
PATIENCE
WARMTH AND WELCOME
WHICH IS NOT
JUDGEMENTAL**

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

6. There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter

10. ... an evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral!

83. And so the biggest threat of all gradually takes shape: "the grey pragmatism of the daily life of the Church, in which all appears to proceed normally, while in reality faith is wearing down and degenerating into small-mindedness". A tomb psychology thus develops and slowly transforms Christians into mummies in a museum.

85. One of the more serious temptations ... is defeatism which turns us into querulous and disillusioned pessimists, 'sourpusses'.

2. MYSTAGOGICAL CATECHESIS

166. Another aspect of catechesis which has developed in recent decades is *mystagogic initiation*.[\[128\]](#)

This basically has to do with **two things**:

a progressive experience of formation involving the entire community

and a renewed appreciation of the liturgical signs of Christian initiation.

Many manuals and programmes have not yet taken sufficiently into account **the need for a mystagogical renewal**, one which would assume very different forms based on each educational community's discernment. ... (cont.)

The Elements of Mystagogical Catechesis

... (cont.) Catechesis is a **proclamation of the word** and is

always centred on that word,

yet it also demands

a suitable environment

and an attractive presentation,

the use of eloquent symbols,

insertion into a broader growth process

and the integration of every dimension of the person

within a communal journey of hearing and response.

Via Pulchritudinis ... The Way of Beauty

167. Every form of catechesis would do well to attend to the “way of beauty” (*via pulchritudinis*).^[129]

Proclaiming Christ means showing that to believe in and to follow him

is not only something right and true, but also something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendour and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties. Every expression of true beauty can thus be acknowledged as a **path leading to an encounter with the Lord Jesus.**

This has nothing to do with fostering an aesthetic relativism^[130] which would downplay the inseparable bond between truth, goodness and beauty,

but rather a renewed esteem for **beauty as a means of touching the human heart and enabling the truth and goodness of the Risen Christ to radiate within it.** ... (cont.)

... (cont.) If, as Saint Augustine says, we love only that which is beautiful,^[131] **the incarnate Son, as the revelation of infinite beauty, is supremely lovable and draws us to himself with bonds of love.**

So a formation in the *via pulchritudinis* ought to be part of our effort to pass on the faith.

Each particular Church should encourage the use of the arts in evangelization, building on the treasures of the past but also drawing upon the wide variety of contemporary expressions so as to transmit the faith in a new “language of parables”.^[132]

We must be bold enough to discover new signs and new symbols, new flesh to embody and communicate the word, and different forms of beauty which are valued in different cultural settings,

including those unconventional modes of beauty which may mean little to the evangelizers, yet prove particularly attractive for others.

3. MORAL CATECHESIS

168. As for the moral component of catechesis, which promotes growth in **fidelity to the Gospel way of life,** it is helpful to **stress again and again the attractiveness and the ideal of a life of wisdom, self-fulfilment and enrichment.**

In the light of that positive message, **our rejection of the evils which endanger that life** can be better understood.

Rather than experts in **dire predictions, dour judges** bent on rooting out every threat and deviation, we should appear

as **joyful messengers of challenging proposals, guardians of the goodness and beauty which shine forth in a life of fidelity to the Gospel.**

We are all missionary disciples

- 120. In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. *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.
- The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love.
- **Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus:**
- we no longer say that we are “disciples” and “missionaries”, but rather that we are always **“missionary disciples”.**

Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ

Jesus:

we no longer say that we are “disciples” and “missionaries”, but rather that we are always “missionary disciples”.

“missionary disciples”

MISSIONARY

DISCIPLES

Diocesan gathering of Rome, 17 June 2013

I want to tell you something. There is a beautiful passage of the Gospel which tells us about the shepherd who, when he returned to the sheepfold realized that one sheep was missing. He left the 99 others and went in search of it, he went off to look for one.

But brothers and sisters, we have one sheep. We have lost the other 99! We must go out, we must go out to them!

In this culture — let us tell the truth — we only have one, we are a minority! And do we feel the fervour, the apostolic zeal to go out and find the other 99?

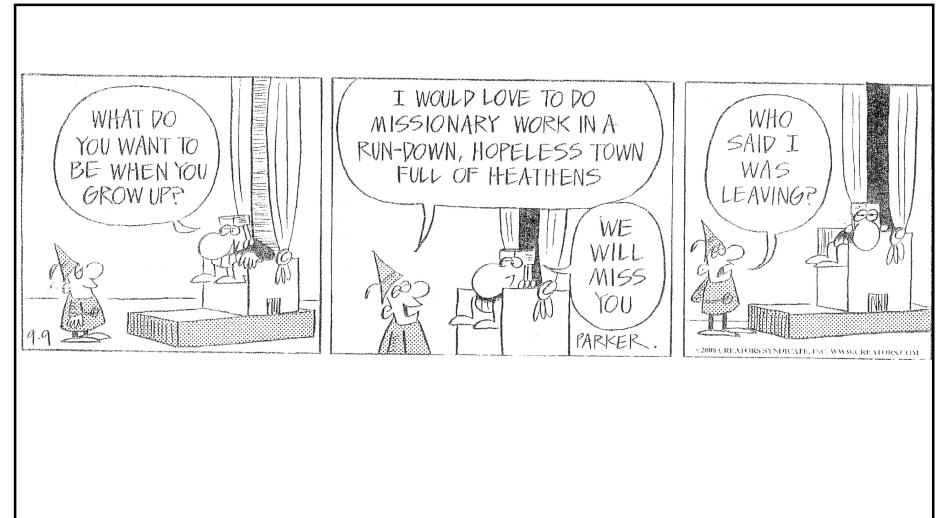
This is an enormous responsibility and we must ask the Lord for the grace of generosity, and the courage and patience to go out, to go out and preach the Gospel.

Ah, this is difficult. It is easier to stay at home, with that one sheep! It is easier with that sheep to comb its fleece, to stroke it...

but we priests and you Christians too, everyone: the Lord wants us to be shepherds, he does not want us to fuss with combing fleeces! Shepherds!

And when a community is withdrawn, always among the same people who speak, this community is not a life-giving community. It is barren, it is not fertile.

The fecundity of the Gospel comes through the grace of Jesus Christ, but through us, our preaching, our courage, our patience.



I wish you Christ!

Pope Benedict says:

'If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great.

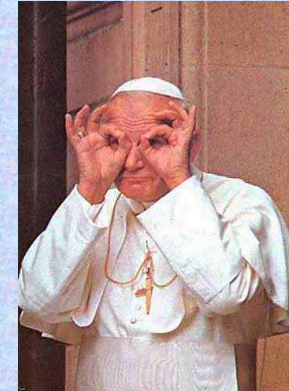
No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed.'

*



Now go and
work in the
Vineyard of
the Lord!

You're being
watched!



TWO STORIES FROM THE BIBLE

- Numbers 11:25-29

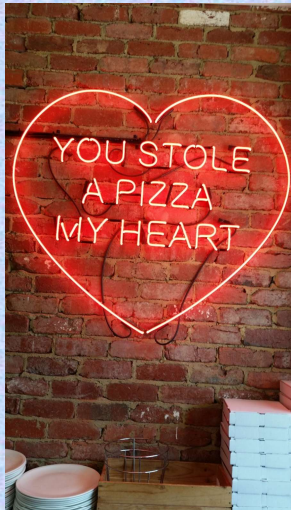
Eldad and Medad began to prophesy in the camp, **though they had not been in the Tent.**

Then said Joshua the son of Nun, who had served Moses from his youth, 'My Lord Moses, stop them!' Moses answered him, 'Are you jealous on my account? **If only the whole people of the Lord were prophets, and the Lord gave his Spirit to them all.**'

- Mk 9:38-43, 45

John said to Jesus, 'Master, we saw a man who is not one of us casting out devils in your name; and **because he was not one of us we tried to stop him.**'

But Jesus said, 'You must not stop him: **no one who works a miracle in my name is likely to speak evil of me.** Anyone who is not against us is for us. **If anyone** gives you a cup of water to drink just because you belong to Christ, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'



TWO QUOTES FROM EUCH PRAYER IV

Therefore, Lord, remember now
all for whom we offer this sacrifice:
especially your servant Francis our Pope,
N. our Bishop, [and his assistant Bishops]
and the whole Order of Bishops,
all the clergy,
those who take part in this offering,
those gathered here before you,
your entire people,
and all who seek you with a sincere heart.

Remember also
those who have died in the peace of your Christ
and all the dead,
whose faith you alone have known.