

Evangelization 101
Our Lady of the Lake
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Definition

- What does "evangelization" mean?
- The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." *Matthew 28:16-20*

Definition

- **Evangelization = Make Disciples**
- **Disciple** = One who follows, studies, learns
- **Note**, being a disciple:
 - Has levels of depth (knowledge/relationship)
 - Is a life-long process
 - Is understood in the context of culture
 - Is concretely lived within the unique situation of a person's life

Definition

- To evangelize:
 - We “**make disciples**” who follow Jesus Christ
 - Presumes a relationship with the Lord Jesus
 - This relationship is growing and deepening
 - Within the context of the Catholic Church
 - In union with the Teaching/Tradition instituted by JC
 - Includes: Sacraments, Fellowship, Virtue, Scripture, etc.
 - To live actively in the world
 - In the unique circumstances of an individual’s life

How do we make disciples?

We begin with ourselves!

- How would we characterize our relationship with the Lord?
- How do we actively participate in the life of the Church?
- How do we offer our lives for service in the world?

Our growth as disciples

- Our lived witness as people who:
 - Love Jesus Christ and strive to follow him
 - Live within the Catholic Church and its precepts
 - Serve in unique ways within the context of our lives

Demonstrates and gives witness to others!
It’s the “proof” that is most convincing.

Our growth as disciples

- We prepare our own "witness" talk
 - Answers the question: *Why do I follow Jesus?*
 - Has a simple 3-part format
 - My life before a key moment of faith
 - A faith event that profoundly changed me in some way
 - My new life now in Christ...and why it is blessed
 - Is short! Can be given in under 3 minutes
 - Is real...this is something that gives you meaning, strength, conviction and personal insight

Parish Life

- **Making Disciples** takes on different applications when applied to different groups of people:
 - The "Core" of the Parish who are highly actively
 - The parishioners who attend only occasionally
 - The parishioners who do not attend but still consider themselves Catholic
 - No faith: hostile, jaded, apathetic...or "none"

Parish Life

- Feed the Core
- Invite/Connect the Occasional
- Reconnect/Heal those not Attending
- Engage the rest with gentleness, patience and a sharp awareness of the obstacles that are keeping people from a relationship with Jesus Christ

Parish Life

- Every parish and its leadership must discern what practical steps need to be taken for the different groups
 - This requires an awareness of the parish, including history, past issues, personalities, etc
 - An understanding of the resources and opportunities that are available to the parish
- Note: This discernment will be unique to each parish, guided by standard principles

Parish Life

- **Making Disciples** means that we are willing to evaluate different aspects of parish life to see how we are carrying this out
 - If we already are, how can we make it better?
 - If we are doing something that's not working, how can we fix it?
 - If we are doing something that has nothing to do with making disciples, does it even belong?

Parish Life

- Practical Points about **Making Disciples**
 - This is not a "program" that we run and move on
 - It is a way that we intentionally meet the needs of our people...in ways that speak to their situation
 - We must be authentic witnesses of Christ
 - We look for practical ways to improve what we do
 - We look for new ways to connect with people
 - We dare to try and we honestly evaluate our efforts (NOT - "It's always been done this way")

Resources

- Books
 - From Christendom to Apostolic Mission: Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age. University of Mary Press. Msgr. James P. Shea. 2020

 - Divine Renovation: Bringing your parish from maintenance to mission. Twenty-Third Publications. Fr. James Mallon. 2014

Resources

- Video Series
 - Alpha Course
 - Discovering Christ
 - The 99
 - The Search
- Note: refer to handout from the Diocese of Superior

Resources

- Web Based (a few examples...there are MANY)
 - The Holy See (Pope, Church Documents, etc.)
 - vatican.va
 - USCCB (American Bishops)
 - usccb.org
 - WORD on FIRE (Bishop Robert Barron)
 - wordonfire.org
 - Fr. Samuel's Pod (Diocese of Superior/Navy)
 - frsamuelspod.com

Resources

- Podcasts (a few examples...there are MANY)
 - **WORD on FIRE** (Bp. Barron, scholarly/thoughtful)
 - **Fr. Mike Schmitz** (popular with young adults)
 - **Catholic Answers** (helpful about many topics)
 - **Catholic Inspiration** (daily homilies by Fr. Andrew)
 - **Anchored in the Lord** (Fr. David Neuschwander)
- Go to any podcast platform, type in “Catholic” and browse what comes up...and see what strikes you!

Diocese Mission Initiative

- The Diocese of Superior is beginning a long-range process that moves our local parishes from Maintenance to Mission
- Over the next three years a number of steps will be taken to train priests, deacons, lay leaders, parish leadership, staff and volunteers
- In short, we are part of a much bigger process that is going on throughout the Diocese

Next Steps

- Evaluate our own lives
 - Prayer Life
 - Sacraments
 - Spiritual Growth/Virtue
- Reflect and compose our own witness talk
- Recommit ourselves to our parish
 - Attendance, Involvement, Part of the Solution!
- Discern how the Lord is inviting us to serve

Next Steps

- Parish Life
 - Review Resources, consider studying and planning
 - Articulate our different groups and their needs
 - Assess our resources and opportunities
 - Examine our events and programs
 - How are they helping to Make Disciples?
 - How can they be improved?
 - Does something need to be replaced?

Homework

- What's my Faith Story -- my Testimonial?
 - Describe a moment when I experienced God
 - Describe what my life was like BEFORE and AFTER that experience.
 - Put it all together:
 - Before (my life was missing something)
 - Experience (what happened?)
 - After (my life is better in this way)

Homework

- Reflect and name real people in your community of the following groups
 - Core (they come to everything)
 - Occasional (C/E, 1x/month, Weddings, etc)
 - Distantly Connected (don't come, still "Catholic")
 - Nones (Hostile, Apathetic, No experience, etc)

Homework

- Thinking through the names of the real people in these different groups, what are some resources that would help them take a step closer to the Lord?
 - Reading materials
 - Catechesis/Bible Study
 - Video, Podcast, Web resources
 - Fellowship, Hospitality, Group Discussion
 - Service Opportunities

Homework

- My Parish: what natural assets/resources do we have or do that are powerful?
 - Buildings (Church/Hall/School)
 - Leadership (People with great talent/conviction)
 - Long standing events (dinners/socials)
 - Long standing connections (Mission/Service Project)
 - Other (Music, community events, natural resources, tourism, universities/technical schools)

Homework

- Name a Parish Event (or more than one)
- How does it help make disciples?
- How can it be improved?
- Is it something that needs to be replaced?
