# “Response”

This week, we are going to complete our study of Kerygma. The four identifiers or topics are “Created,” Captured,” Rescued,” and our topic today, “Response.” In Rescue, we saw how God so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son to come and rescue us from the hands of sin and death. Jesus, by His death on the cross gave life to all of us and the universe. However, in creating us, God gave us the gift of free will, which means we are free to choose His way or our own way. Jesus came the first time to lift the veil from our eyes so we can see the deceptive ways of the evil one and to destroy sin and the evil one. He came to open our eyes so we can see that He, is the light of the world and we will have peace only God can give.

Jesus is the light that has come to remove darkness from our life. He laid down His life for us so we can live. How do we respond to our Lord’s invitation to follow Him? We respond by deepening our faith in Him. We hear the word of God every time we celebrate Mass and most of us probably read it at home. His word is living, not a relic from the past. Through His word Jesus invites us increase and deepen our faith and persevere in our love. His word is also a challenge for us to grow more in holiness, to be uncompromising in rejecting any attachment to sin. He wants us to grow our faith from the size of a mustard seed to the size of a bush. Jesus asked us to obey His commandments of love of God and love of neighbor.

It is after we achieve all these that our light will shine for the world to see. However, we must remember that the word of God is intended to make us uncomfortable, to stir us out of complacency, God does not wish for us to hear His word in a passive way as we might word that comes to us from a radio or television. He wants His word to light a fire in our heart, so they would be burning like those of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. What did they do after having a Mass with Jesus? They did not sit around reflecting on His word. Instead, they sprang into action. They went back to where they came from, (Jerusalem) to tell others about the good news of their encounter with Jesus. Similarly, we are asked to do the same, to go and tell others what God has done for us.

The Kerygma is essential to our faith. It is the most important message in the history of the world because it is God revealing Himself to us through His Son our savior. Kerygma tells us how much God loves us and how much we matter to Him. He came into the world to rescue us in an amazing way. He took up our flesh in other to die for us and restore us to become the children of God. He suffered, died, and rose from the dead for each one of us so we can have eternal life with Him in heaven. When we go deeper into Scripture, we should wonder why some people reject Him. Why they do not believe in Him? We won’t have to think too deeply to realize that it is because of the work of the evil one and they have bought into his lies.

The goal of the Kerygma is to deepen our lives in the love of God by responding to His love with abandonment. So we will be transformed and be unfazed in trials and tribulations and be ready to spread this Good News to others so they too will be transformed by the love of Christ as we have been transformed. God wants us to share with others what He has done for us. It is then the world would know God is not asleep or disinterested in His creation. This is our mission as Jesus said after His resurrection, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt. 28: 18-20).*

Pope St. John Pull II preached about the term *“New Evangelization.”* He explained that it is not about a new gospel. It is the same gospel that have been preached for over 2000 years. But, preached with passion, in method, and expression. It is new in passion in that all Catholics need to be rekindled in a fire of zeal to proclaim Christ to others in both word and deed. It is new in method in that we must use methods adapted to our time, which includes new and creative means of reaching people, as well as using up-to-date technologies. It is new in expression in that we cannot simply repeat the formulas used in the past but those that would move and touch the hearts of this generation. He said, ***“… we must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out***: **“Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”** (1 Cor. 9:16).

God has given us through our baptism the grace to spread His Gospel all over the world. It is up to us to take His message and live it out in a practical way for the world to see, not just on Sunday, but from one Sunday to the next Sunday, in other words, daily. For example, we might let someone go ahead of us in a communion line but a few minutes later, in the parking lot, we might cut the same person off from going ahead of us. That would not show the love of others Christ wants us to have for one another. It will not be Christ like.

Jesus expects us to accept and live the message of the Gospel every moment of our lives. That is when we will be the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Light, so others could see and say, see how they love one another. Salt, so we can preserve the authentic teachings of the Kerygma, that is, proclaiming the Good News or the Kerygma. It indicates that we are spreading the word of God to the world.

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask Him for more grace so we can keep on doing His work of renewing the face of the earth.