

Proclaiming the Gospel

I. 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. ... I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy. *Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, ¶ 1.*

II. "May you come to realize what that **word** is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life. Let yourself be transformed. Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so that this can happen, lest you fail in your precious mission. The Lord will bring it to fulfillment despite your mistakes and missteps, provided that you do not abandon the path of love but remain ever open to his supernatural grace, which purifies and enlightens."
Pope Francis, Gaudium et Exultate, ¶24.

III. "How often we are tempted to keep close to the shore! Yet the Lord calls us to put out into the deep and let down our nets (cf. *Lk 5:4*). He bids us spend our lives in his service. Clinging to him, we are inspired to put all our charisms at the service of others. May we always feel compelled by his love (*2 Cor 5:14*) and say with Saint Paul: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (*1 Cor 9:16*). *Pope Francis, Gaudium et Exultate, ¶130.*

IV. "There is a kind of preaching which falls to each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the Gospel to the people we meet, whether they be our neighbours or complete strangers. This is the informal preaching which takes place in the middle of a conversation, something along the lines of what a missionary does when visiting a home. Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey. The first step is personal dialogue, when the other person speaks and shares his or her joys, hopes and concerns for loved ones, or so many other heartfelt needs. Only afterwards is it possible to bring up God's word, perhaps by reading a Bible verse or relating a story, but always keeping in mind the fundamental message: the personal love of God who became man, who gave himself up for us, who is living and who offers us his salvation and his friendship. This message has to be shared humbly as a testimony on the part of one who is always willing to learn, in the awareness that the message is so rich and so deep that it always exceeds our grasp. At times the message can be presented directly, at times by way of a personal witness or gesture, or in a way which the Holy Spirit may suggest in that particular situation. If it seems prudent and if the circumstances are right, this fraternal and missionary encounter could end with a brief prayer related to the concerns which the person may have expressed. In this way they will have an experience of being listened to and understood; they will know that their particular situation has been placed before God, and that God's word really speaks to their lives."

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, ¶ 127-128

V. "The primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus which we have received, the experience of salvation which urges us to ever greater love of him. What kind of love would not feel the need to speak of the beloved, to point him out, to make him known? If we do not feel an intense desire to share this love, we need to pray insistently that he will once more touch our

hearts. We need to implore his grace daily, asking him to open our cold hearts and shake up our lukewarm and superficial existence."

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, ¶264

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LECTIO DIVINA

- ✦ Choose a quiet prayerful place in your home, office, outdoors, or church
- ✦ Select a short passage of the Word of God, for example the Sunday or daily Gospel, or a continuous reading of one book of Scripture
- ✦ Select an appropriate time and duration (20 to 40 minutes for those beginning)
- ✦ Assume a prayerful and serene posture, comfortable yet not too relaxed

Introductory Prayer

- ✦ Humbly recognize the Presence of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- ✦ Praise and thank Him for His Word and this moment of prayer
- ✦ Ask the Holy Spirit for the gift to receive the Word of God as He wills Him to be received

Lectio (Reading) - What does the Word of God say?

- ✦ Slowly read the passage with great attention and reverence a few times, aloud if possible
- ✦ Notice the words that strike you in a particular way, positively or negatively

Meditatio (Meditation) - What does the Word of God say to me?

- ✦ Think about why those particular words and phrases struck you; how do they apply to you?
- ✦ Reflect on your own reactions to the Word; what is God showing you about yourself?
- ✦ Write down reflections and insights

Oratio (Praying) - What do I say to God in response to His Word?

- ✦ Respond sincerely in a conversation with God as with a friend; talk about what is really in your heart
- ✦ Praise, thank, trust Him; ask for forgiveness; intercede, petition for graces

Contemplatio (Contemplation)

- ✦ Be with the Word and rest in God
- ✦ Simply spend time with God in adoration

Concluding Prayer

- ✦ Praise and thank God for the graces received
- ✦ Close with *Our Father*