

## **Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, January 15, 2012 Year B COH**

### **John 1:35-42**

In Pope John Paul II's encyclicals, speeches and other writings he uses the term **new evangelization**. What is he referring to and what are characteristics of this new evangelization'?

According to the pope, "The expression New Evangelization was popularized in the encyclical of Pope Paul VI Evangelization in the Modern World, as a response to the new challenges-that the contemporary world creates for the mission of the Church."

Pope John Paul II saw the need for a "great relaunching" of evangelization in the present life of the Church. He presents a new vision of the Church's teaching about evangelization in modern times.

His call to a new evangelization was a prophetic and revolutionary calling to the Catholic Church.

The notion of evangelization may seem foreign to Catholics.

However in light of the times we are living in, the changing world scene, the deterioration of western civilization, and the persecution of the Church in many parts of the world, the call to a new evangelization is imperative.

The entire Church must come to embrace this calling and make it a normal part of Catholic life. When Pope John Paul II used the term "a new evangelization" he did not mean a new message.

It is still the fundament proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ. For him the New Evangelization is the responsibility of the entire People of God.

Not just those with a special vocation, missionaries or clergy. And it is not just for remote and foreign parts of the world. The secularism of the western world badly needs reevangelization.

Then just recently, on October 16, 2011, Pope Benedict offered a Mass for the New Evangelization. And in his homily he proclaimed a "Year of Faith."

It will begin on October, 11 2012 on the 50th anniversary of the opening of the [Second Vatican Council](#) and will end on 24 November 2013, the Solemnity of Christ the King.

He said "It will be a time of grace and commitment for an ever fuller conversion to God, to strengthen our faith in Him and to proclaim Him with joy to the people of our time."

And he called on all of us to be new evangelizers and go forth, not without difficulties but with the same enthusiasm as the first Christians.

How to communicate?

You know, despite all the slick, hi-tech forms of advertising and communication we have in our modern world, "word of mouth" is still an effective way to find out about things.

Today's Gospel depicts the effectiveness of word of mouth in spreading the news about Jesus.

John the Baptist points out Jesus to Andrew and another of his disciples, who decide to follow Jesus. Then Andrew tells Peter.

And in the verses that follow today's passage we read that the very next day Jesus went to Galilee.

And found Philip who in turn went to share with Nathaniel the Good News that was spreading though out Galilee.

Each new disciple shares what he has discovered. Eventually a small circle of disciples gathers around Jesus—all through word of mouth.

In this new evangelization, we are the ones who are to speak the words of Jesus. **Come and see.**

As we heard in our first reading from the book of Samuel, when the Lord was with him, none of his words were without effect. The same can be true of us.

As I said before, we Catholics don't often consider themselves "evangelizers." We may see other Christian denominations making more aggressive efforts to acquaint people with Jesus.

But perhaps we should take a cue from John the Baptist, Andrew and the other disciples portrayed in John's Gospel.

What might we tell those who live, work, and roam the streets in downtown Seattle Jesus today?

How has he changed our lives?

Can we confidently invite others to "come and see"--and perhaps find the new life that flows from him? Especially, the young and those who haven't been to Mass for a while.

And lastly, it is in the liturgy that we also hear the call to evangelize. It is in the New Roman Missal that we hear **NEW** word as we are dismissed from Mass.

There four new choices that the priest or deacon can use at the end. All four begin with the word GO!

Go Forth, the Mass is ended.

Go in peace.

Go, and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All meaning that, after sharing the Eucharist, we are to get up and proclaim the Good News.

Proclaim it in words and deeds. Announce it and truly live it out each and every day.

It is then that the world can begin to change.

Because of us someone can feel the dignity of being human.

Someone will be able to listen to Jesus with open ears.

Someone who is lonely can feel the touch of God.

A struggling single parent can find truth and goodness in a world that seems bleak and empty by our Christ-like care and compassion.

Someone can discover that to be genuinely Christian is to be alive with love, laughter, and peaceful joy.

My brothers and sisters, there is no way you and I may live our faith part time.

Sunday Mass is not our only duty. We all have particular roads that God wants us to follow.

But no matter whether lawyer or doctor, mother or father, student or teacher, blue collar or executive, healthy or infirmed, young or middle aged, or old we are called to preach and live the gospel in our little corner of the world.

So, as we come to the table of the Lord, let us be given NEW strength,  
to live out our NEW Mission Statement,  
and become NEW Evangelizers to all in downtown Seattle and to those who visit us.