



LESSON TWENTY-EIGHT

Discipleship and Evangelization: Sharing the Joy

Opening Prayer

O God, you have willed that your Church be the sacrament of salvation for all nations, so that Christ's saving work may continue to the end of the ages; stir up, we pray, the hearts of your faithful and grant that they may feel a more urgent call to work for the salvation of every creature, so that from all the peoples on earth one family and one people of your own may arise and increase. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

*Amen.*¹

1. From the Collect for the Mass "For the Evangelization of Peoples (B)," *The Roman Missal* (2011), p. 1281.



Lesson Objectives:

- ❖ Understand what it means to be a disciple of Christ, pursuing a personal, lifelong relationship with Jesus marked by learning from him, imitating his life, and allowing him to transform every part of our own.
- ❖ Recognize the relationship between discipleship and evangelization, and the connection between the personal call to holiness and mission, which are inseparable.
- ❖ Identify practical ways to share faith with others.
- ❖ Connect the Church's missionary nature with personal vocation and understand that it's every member's duty.

BURNING QUESTIONS

- ❖ Isn't it enough to just be a good person? Why do I need to evangelize?

What do you think of when you think of evangelization? Do some evangelization tactics make you uncomfortable? Why? In contrast, think about what made you want to become Catholic.

- ❖ Isn't it arrogant to get other people to share my beliefs? Shouldn't we be more tolerant of different beliefs?

This raises other questions: Is my faith simply a personal preference, a kind of religious style? Or is it the answer to a deep hunger that many other people have too? Does Jesus' presence in the world actually matter? Someone once said that evangelizing is simply one beggar telling another beggar where to find food. What if that were true?

St. Francis Xavier

Feast Day: December 3

Lived: April 7, 1506–December 3, 1552 · Xavier, Spain · Patron of Missions

A brilliant, ambitious young nobleman, Francis was challenged by the quiet witness of his fellow student Ignatius of Loyola, who kept asking him Christ's own question: "What does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" Francis gave his life to Christ, joined the Jesuits, and spent over a decade bringing the Gospel to India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Japan, baptizing tens of thousands who had never heard the name of Jesus before he died in 1552, just short of reaching China.



"Speak to them of the treasures of the infinite mercies of God."

St. Francis Xavier

Beyond Being a Good Person

A Call to Conversion

In a culture shaped by polite morality and vague spirituality, there is a temptation to reduce the Christian life to “being a good person.” But Jesus did not come merely to make us behave better—he came to make us new. He did not go to the Cross so we could “be nice”; he gave his life to restore what was broken and to bring us into a transforming relationship. When he says, “Follow me” (Matthew 4:19), he is calling us to conversion, not comfort.

Two Sides of One Coin

Discipleship and evangelization are not two separate things; they are two sides of the same coin. To be a disciple is to follow Jesus. To evangelize is to help others do the same. Both are rooted in one truth: God calls every baptized person to grow in union with Christ and to mission. The same Jesus who says “Follow me” also says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

“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.”

Matthew 28:19

The Sacrament That Sends Us

Baptism and Confirmation: Commissioned for Mission

Through Baptism, we are not only cleansed from sin; we are commissioned. We are anointed as priest, prophet, and king, meaning our lives are meant to be offered in worship, lived in truth, and poured out in loving service. Confirmation completes these baptismal graces, strengthening us with the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Faith publicly by both words and actions.

Discipleship and Evangelization: One Mission

The Great Commission is Jesus' command to his apostles to make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching them all he commanded. To evangelize does not necessarily mean preaching on a street corner; it means living so that others encounter Jesus through us, witnessing to the love we have received.

“Having become a member of the Church, the person baptized belongs no longer to himself, but to him who died and rose for us.”

CCC 1269



The *Kerygma*

The Core Proclamation

The *kerygma* is the heart of the Gospel message, an invitation from Christ himself: God created us in love for communion with him. Sin broke that communion. Jesus entered our brokenness, took on our sin, died for us, and rose again to restore us to the Father. He invites us to respond through faith, repentance, Baptism, and life in his Church. Every act of evangelization, at its root, is a re-proclamation of this same story.

Presence Before Words

The most powerful proclamation of the *kerygma* happens through authentic presence: loving generously, listening patiently, forgiving freely. As Pope Francis put it, “Each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are.”¹ When the moment comes for words, they grow naturally out of a life already speaking the Gospel.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

1. Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013), 121, vatican.va.

Encounter and Mission

It Begins with Encounter

Personal testimony is one of the most powerful and accessible forms of evangelization. Faith, at its foundation, is an encounter with the Lord, and sharing that encounter gives others hope, reminding them that God is present and active today. Here is a simple structure for testimony: life before Jesus (what was missing, what questions you carried), the encounter with Jesus (how God broke through), and life after (what changed—be honest, not performative).

God's Plan and Your "Yes"

You are not here by accident. Every chapter of your story, even the painful ones, matters. You do not need to travel across the world to live the Great Commission—start where you are: at the dinner table, on a lunch break, in a quiet moment with a coworker or friend.



"I know the plans I have for you ... plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Jeremiah 29:11



Discussion Questions

- ❖ What role does personal vulnerability and humility play in sharing our faith with others?
- ❖ What prevents us from recognizing or acting on opportunities to share our faith? How can we become more attentive to the people in our lives who might be genuinely open to spiritual conversations?
- ❖ What does “changing the schedule to get closer to Jesus” look like in everyday life?

Faith and Fun

One of the Gospels tells us how Jesus, after his Resurrection, forgave and restored Peter with the threefold question, “Do you love me?” and then commissioned him to “feed my sheep.” Which Gospel contains this account?

a. Matthew

b. Mark

c. Luke

d. John

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This powerful moment happens after the Resurrection and mirrors Peter’s threefold denial. Jesus does not shame Peter; he restores him, lovingly and deliberately. It shows that discipleship is not about never failing, but about returning to Christ and allowing him to send us again. It is a reminder that even when we fall short, God still entrusts us with mission. Evangelization begins with love: “Do you love me?” Only then comes the commission: “Feed my sheep.”

This moment is a beautiful example of how Jesus forms missionary disciples through love and renewed relationship.

Mary, the Model Evangelist

Mary's Fiat: Mission Begins with Surrender

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary at the Annunciation, she responded with faith rather than fear: “Let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). That simple yes opened the door for Christ to enter the world and reveals something essential for every Christian: mission begins with surrender, with attentive listening and a heart open to God’s will.

Carrying Christ to Others: The Visitation and Cana

Mary’s life always points to her son. When she visited her cousin Elizabeth, she brought Jesus with her simply by her presence, and John the Baptist leapt for joy in his mother's womb. At the wedding at Cana, she told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5). She says the same thing to us. Her whole mission is to bring people into deeper communion with Jesus.



Living It Out:

Identify one place in your daily life where you can intentionally bring the love of Christ. Ask yourself, *How can I be more patient, joyful, or attentive to others here? Can I offer to pray for someone or simply listen with compassion?*

Closing Prayer

*“Mary, Virgin and Mother,
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed the word of life
in the depths of your humble faith:
as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
help us to say our own ‘yes’
to the urgent call, as pressing as ever,
to proclaim the good news of Jesus. ...
Obtain for us now a new ardor born of
the resurrection,
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life
which triumphs over death.
Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,*

*that the gift of unfading beauty
may reach every man and woman. ...
Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.
Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God’s little ones,
pray for us.
Amen. Alleluia!”¹*

1. Excerpt from Francis, Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013), 288.

Announcements / Reminders — add notes here