

New Evangelisation:

A new call

■ Dariusz Jeziorny

The question of evangelisation has always been a central problem for the Church. But it was blessed Pope John Paul II who called Catholics for New Evangelization at the beginning of his pontificate. In his vision this New Evangelization was to be very traditional, as far as its contents is concerned but proclaimed with new ardour, new methods and new expressions. That call started by the Holy Spirit moved people into many new initiatives. Plenty of them were rooted in Charismatic Renewal. But Pope Benedict XVI made a call for new evangelisation even more dramatic. In 2007 the *Lineamenta* were announced. In October 2010 the new Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization was founded. The main aim of this new Institution is a focus on a renewed proclamation of the Gospel, in nations with an ancient Christian tradition, which suffer a visible crisis of their Christian identity.

A year later Archbishop Rino Fisichella, the President of the Vatican dicastery called a meeting titled “New Evangelisers for the New Evangelisation” which took place in Rome on October 14th and 15th, 2011. This event was one of preparatory steps before the Synod which is expected from October 7th to 28th, 2012 and titled “The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith”. A week after the Rome event the Holy Father Benedict XVI named Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, D.C. a relator of the Synod. But it was not the last step of preparations for the Synod. On November 22nd, 2011 a special seminar was called in Rome. The initiative

was taken up by the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization and the Council of European Episcopal Conferences (CCEE), which celebrated the 40th anniversary of its existence. It was an occasion for Cardinals Tarcisio Bertone (Vatican Secretary of State) and Péter Erdő (President of the CCEE) to emphasize the need

of New Evangelization. Archbishop Rino Fisichella added that he saw a global perspective for the New Evangelization. In his opinion there is more need than re-enchaining the faith in Europe.

This short overview shows very clearly that the New Evangelization is a “hot” topic in the Vatican



nowadays and that means it is a challenge for the whole Church. It was visible that many people involved in this area answered Pope Benedict’s call in a very noble way. The meeting “New Evangelizers for the New Evangelization” gathered above 400 key leaders (both priests and lay people) in the New Synod Hall in the Vatican for the Saturday morning session. In the afternoon the Paul VI Hall was full of participants who gathered again on Sunday morning for the closing Mass celebrated by the Holy Father. So the majority of people involved in New Evangelization were not able to participate in the opening Saturday session which seemed to be very important.

What made the Saturday morning so crucial, was an introduction of Archbishop Fisichella who outlined spheres of New Evangelizers’ activities. He mentioned liturgy (particularly sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation), family, culture, politics, social communication, immigrants and the renewal parish life (small groups were indicated as best tool to make the parish’s life dynamic, and only a vivid and active participation of members can involve more persons). These topics were discussed by the participants who also had very important contribution in working on final results. Let me mention the evangelisation in the seminaries, where future priests are being prepared for their missions and it is important that they are not “sad priests” and knowing nothing in their hearts about the risen Lord. The other people not to forget about the spiritual warfare, f.i. is the ministry of exorcists and people who pray for deliverance. Finally, it is necessary to notice evangelisation of young people. This voice from the audience seems to be very important in “Catholic Poland”, where we had parliamentary elections on October 9th and the new party appeared on the political scene winning 10% of votes. It is very anti-Christian in its phraseology. About 24% of young persons aged between 18-25 voted for this new party which seems to be a very appealing factor.

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The Vatican event showed the Pope’s heart for the New Evangelization. He was present with us twice. First he addressed a short message on Saturday afternoon and then a homily during the Sunday Mass. His words on the growth of the Word of God were important reminder for all who are involved in New Evangelization and can suffer because of pride, when everything goes well, or because of confusion when the symptoms of unsuccessful activities appear. The Pope mentioned three reasons of growth:

1. “The strength of the Word does not depend, in the first place, on our action, on our means, on our ‘doing’, but on God, who hides his power under the signs of weakness”. All people who are active in any ministry in Jesus’ name acknowledge this fully. One can say the same sentence and it moves hearts of the listening people and next time it is totally different.
2. “The seed of the Word, as the Gospel parable of the Sower narrates, falls also today on good soil that receives it and produces fruit”. No doubt such a good soil exists in our reality.
3. “The proclamation of the Gospel has effectively reached the ends of the earth” —many people continue to spread the Good News “even in the midst of indifference, incomprehension and persecution”. Such people were compared to “the grain of mustard that becomes a tree, the leaven that ferments the dough, the grain of wheat that is destroyed to create the ear”. But the Pope added during the Sunday homily that it is not possible to be effective as a self-sufficient person: the evangelisers are called to work in communion with others, with the whole Church. That also means under the authority of the Church.

The Holy Father’s explanation was in accordance with prophecies which were proclaimed during the European meeting of key National leaders, which took place in Heiligenbrunn (Southern Germany) from 17th to 20th November, 2011. The first one was a vision of a huge field ready for harvesting. This work was to start next day. But after a night only some remnants were available for God’s workers. The understanding was quite clear. The field ready for the harvest means that there is a real hunger for God and sanctity. But to be a good harvester one must be ready in any moment to evangelise and be equipped with the power of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise we will be only able to follow our enemy and harvest the remnants that survived in present world. The second prophetic word was a call for conversion. The European leaders were confronted with the need to give up their comfortable lifestyle, which is one of the main obstacles in taking up missionary challenges.

It is impossible to say something and do the opposite.

Just to summarize all these activities of the hierarchical Church today it might be helpful to ask how CCR could implement the call for New Evangelization to its reality. And the answer is very simple. We have many gifts which are wonderful tools to be shared. I do not even write “we should”. We have to. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a key answer because it is a life changing experience. Each person can describe this moment in a different way. But it covers experience of God’s love, conversion and reception of the person, presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Knowing that the European experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is very limited in the world context I would like to remind what came from the sharing on European level. During the meeting of key national leaders in Autumn 2009 the whole list of possibilities of spreading experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit appeared: life in the Spirit seminars, Phillip courses, alpha courses, various kinds of retreats (the inner healing retreat, the Kana retreat for couples and the Ignatian retreat), youth summer camps, traditional pilgrimages to Sanctuaries where teachings are taken from life in the Spirit seminars, big conferences, Pentecost of the Nations, etc. There are a lot of possibilities to give other people the same life changing experience, which means we have a lot to propose in the area of evangelisation.

However, there is much more the Catholic Charismatic Renewal can offer. Every meeting or ministry where charismatic gifts are present (gift of tongues, prophecy, word of knowledge, powerful intercession and so on) is an evangelistic event. So it is enough to face people’s needs and we are fully involved in evangelisation. That means we can pray for sick people, we can share our own testimonies which bring hope back to people who live in despair, we can produce wonderful charismatic songs that answer to the need beauty, we can share our material assistance with poor people.

Those are only few possibilities to incarnate the Word of God in everyday life. It is enough for us to be ourselves. If we are men and women permeated with the presence of God, we can help people to encounter the risen Lord and contemporary world is really hungry of this experience. “Do not underestimate who you are”, these are words of late Bp. Joe Grech. And then we could say that “our Gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction” (1 Thes 1,5). 🏰



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Servant leadership

■ Jude Muscat

Leadership as exercised and commanded by our Lord presents a revolutionary concept in contrast to what the world presents; “...whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant” (Mk 10:42). Although Jesus took the concept of servant leadership to perfection, some major components of the paradigm of servant leadership already found in the O.T. tradition: humility, accessibility, equality with fellow Israelites, trust in God’s protection, consolation “since those who serve God —must prepare themselves for testing” (Sir 2:1)— and above all obedience to God’s word. Great leaders in the history of Israel like, Moses, Joshua, Jacob and David, were always referred to as the servants of God.

Servant leadership: an attitude

Attitudes of servant leadership are scattered throughout the whole Bible, but the *book of Joshua* presents three major themes presented in the shadow of Moses the servant of God. Trent C. Butler, in his commentary to the *book of Joshua* (*Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 7*), lists these as: (1) Conquest of land; (2) control of land and distribution of land; and, (3) obedience to God.

1. Conquest of land. Behind this theme lies hope in the fact that God has given them the Land (Cf. Josh 2:9,24; 6:2,16; 8:1; 10:8,12; 11:6). From our *New Testament* perspective this is equivalent to Christ’s victory: “...take courage; I have conquered the world!” (John 16:33). Serving God in his people is an attitude that comes from an unwavering trust in the bold proclamation that Jesus is alive and seated on the throne of victory. Whatever the father of lies suggests, whatever the empirical world presents, however strong the suggestion that God has been defeated; the servant leader holds fast to the truth that Christ will come again to claim his victory.

2. Distribution of land. Two ideas can be elicited from this theme: a. Firstly it presents to us the spiritual wealth that comes from the Triune God. As servant leaders we are given the responsibility to distribute God’s wonderful gifts. St Paul encourages Timothy to “give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching” (1Tim 4:13) and not to neglect the gift that is in him. This means a total devotion and commitment to our scripture study and personal quiet time with God, without which we can never find any wealth to distribute to others.

b. Secondly the idea of distribution brings to mind delegation. As servant leaders we are called to identify gifts and help people mature in service. Some leaders do a great disservice when they think they have a synthesis of ministries, when in truth servant leaders should have the ministry of synthesis. Charismatic gifts and ministries are God’s response to the needs of the community. Each ministry is given to the service of the whole, and leadership is an activity in the service of servants.

3. Obedience to God. Obedience to God was, is and forever will be a total yes to God’s will. Through Jesus, obedience becomes a deeper and perfect reality: “he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death —even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). Obedience is not simply a yes to God’s desire

or command. It is a total self-giving to God through the community of believers. Mary’s *Fiat* was immediately transformed into a realisation that she is “the servant of the Lord” (Lk 1:38). Obedience to God’s word in one’s prayer time is important, but it includes listening to community: obedience to the prophecy within the community and also to the needs of the community as they are expressed in verbal or non-verbal communication. Obedience requires a listening ear and an empathic heart; a closeness to the heart of the community.

Getting up from the table

The foot washing act of Jesus (Jn 13:1-15) is the text par excellence which probably highlights all the practical and attitudinal aspects of servant leadership. It is impossible to bring forth all the richness of this text, but I will list those elements which in my opinion are of utmost importance.

1. Laying down one’s life. In 13:3 John declares Jesus’ awareness of his identity: he came from the Father and is going to the Father. For John this knowledge becomes the reason why Jesus rises from the table. This is a great act of humility and becomes a foreshadowing of Christ’s glorification on the cross. Biblical scholars say that the verb *tithēsin* (to set aside or lay aside), which John used to indicate that Jesus took off his outer robe, is used in two other instances in *John* 10:11 to indicate Jesus’ laying down of his life for his sheep and 15:13 in laying down his life for his friends. Foot washing is serious business. It is not simply a good deed, but most importantly it is laying down one’s life as a great expression of love. Knowing that we are leaders we have to get up from the table and lay down our lives.

2. Servant leaders: road signs to Jesus. Throughout John’s gospel Jesus uses water as a tool to reveal his glory and love in order to lead the disciples to faith and draw them into a deeper relationship with him (2:1-11; 9:1-11; 4:1-42). Likewise, servant leaders become tools in Jesus’ hands; through them he draws people unto himself. Servant leaders point towards the one true Lord and God and never unto themselves.

3. Forgiving others. Water represents the cleansing of the disciples (13:10). If the Lord and master cleansed us from our guilt and sin, we must do the same (cf. Mt 18:23-35) It is good to keep in mind that Judas’ feet were also washed. Forgiveness is a loving embrace especially to those who have done us wrong.

Sharing the shame of the cross

Paul teaches that the cross is foolishness and shame (1Cor 1:23; Heb 12:2). Jesus invited Peter into his ministry on the cross by saying: “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me” (John 13:8). Servant leaders must allow Jesus to wash their feet and so they accept to be drawn into Jesus’ ministry and endure the shame of the cross. Therefore, do not be ashamed to confess your love for Jesus crucified and risen; do not be ashamed when you are disregarded because of your faith; do not be ashamed when people call you names because of your love for the Church; do not be ashamed to stand by the lowly, the sinners and spiritually sick, because it is there that Jesus wants his servants to be. 🕯



QUESTIONS TO THE ICCRS DOCTRINAL COMMISSION

The ICCRS Doctrinal Commission, currently headed by Dr. Mary Healy, is in consultation with theologians and experts from around the world.

If you have a question about the CCR, please send it to newsletter@iccrs.org

What should I do after receiving the baptism in the Spirit?

When you received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you may have felt an overflowing joy, an inner fullness, a new sense of the love of God, a new fervor to tell others about Jesus. But this may have been followed by a time of unexpected spiritual dryness and even of more intense spiritual warfare. So what should you do next? How can you sustain, foster and deepen this wonderful grace that you’ve received?

What comes next is to live that outpouring every day, seeking the fullness of life in the Spirit. In order to grow in our spiritual life, we have to make radical choices, turning to the Lord with great confidence. Patti Mansfield, on the day of her baptism in the Holy Spirit, prayed a prayer of unconditional surrender to the will of God: “Lord, I give you my life. I choose all that you desire for me. If it is suffering, I accept it. Only teach me how to follow your Son Jesus and to love as he loves.”

For an example of how to live baptism in the Spirit long-term, there is no better place to look than at biblical account of the very first Christians who received the baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Luke tells us that they “held steadfastly to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42). This way of life remains a model for those baptized in the Spirit today. Let us look at each of its elements.

The Apostles’ Teaching

The early Christians sought to deepen their faith by listening intently to the apostles who had learned from Jesus himself for three years. For us too, it is essential to deepen our knowledge of God by studying Scripture and the teachings of the Church. This includes developing a habit of daily Bible reading and attending formation retreats whenever possible.

Fellowship With Others

The early Christians lives a life of close brotherhood and sisterhood, having “all things in common” (Acts 2:44). This means they cared for one another by generously sharing their material goods. But they also cared for one another by generously sharing the charisms that God had given each for the building up of the body. The charisms are powerful instruments for serving others and being vehicles of God’s love to them. St. Paul tells us: “Pursue love, but strive eagerly for the spiritual gifts, above all that you may prophesy” (1 Cor 14:1). He gives lists of charisms in *1 Corinthians* 12:8-10 and *Romans* 12:6-8, and there are many others besides those listed. To grow in the grace of baptism in the Spirit, we must develop relationships with others who have received this grace and help one another

welcome the charisms, discern them, and exercise them with humility. Our prayer group or community, family prayer, and evangelization are privileged places for the awakening and exercise of charisms. In serving the brethren in love and the obedience of faith, charisms will grow.

The Breaking of Bread


The “breaking of bread” means both that the early Christians enjoyed each other’s company in common meals and that they received the bread of life, the Eucharist. We too sustain and deepen the life of the Spirit within us by participating in the Eucharistic liturgy together and by receiving other sacraments, especially the sacrament of reconciliation.

Prayer

The early Christians loved to attend temple together and praise God (Acts 2:45-47). For us too it is impossible to grow in the Spirit without a regular prayer life. This includes daily time spent with the Lord, praising and worshiping him, listening to him through his Word, and interceding for others. It may also include the rosary and daily Mass if possible.

Life in the Spirit

Finally, growing in the Holy Spirit means being led by the Holy Spirit day by day, as St. Paul exhorts. “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom 8:14). “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:25); “walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16). To gratify the desires of the flesh is to disobey the Word of God, to yield to sin, anger, impurity, or disobedience. The essence of life in the Spirit, in contrast, means:

- Not grieving the Holy Spirit through bitterness, human anger, hot temper, malice (cf. Col 3:8), criticism, bitterness, or unwillingness to forgive.
- Not resisting the Holy Spirit when he convicts us of sin, but acknowledging our sin, repenting, humbling ourselves and confessing. The grace of baptism in the Spirit may fade, dry out, or get lost in lukewarmness because of sin.
- Being filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18), that is, living by the Spirit each day, dedicated to God and separating ourselves from evil. Jesus gave us life in abundance so that we can bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).
- Loving the Holy Spirit, praying to him every day, invoking him, listening to him when he inspires us, and obeying him when he urges us to act in exercising his gifts and charisms. 

ICCRS receives many questions about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and we do our best to answer them with the help of the Doctrinal Commission. Its members kindly take time to check their references and credit their sources. Some of the questions and its answers are published in this section of the ICCRS Leadership Formation. They are selected for their relevancy and helpfulness overall for those involved in the CCR.