

THE RE-EVANGELIZATION OF AMERICA

The mind of America needs re-evangelization. Re-Evangelization means more than converting people from a life of sin. We in this country and in the West need a conversion of the mind. The minds of millions and millions have been perverted by our multi-billion dollar American Education System. Re-Evangelization means converting their minds to accept on Divine authority what God has revealed. It means bringing unbelievers who have thrown away their Christian heritage to become believers.

The Re-Evangelization that Pope John Paul II called for many years ago is new to our vocabulary. The reason is not hard to find. Beginning in the 20th century and continuing on to the present day, we are witnessing the most widespread and devastating loss of faith among Christians in the history of Christianity. There has never been such widespread apostasy among once believing Catholics as in the 20th and 21st centuries. Never! One reason, of course, is the media. There has been an abandonment of Christian belief and morality.

Re-Evangelization means restoring the Christian faith to millions in our country who no longer believe that God became man in the Person of Jesus Christ. Over the past 30 years or more there has been a great indoctrination in Nestorian Christianity. There are many who say today that Christ had the same sex passions as we do! That is not only heresy but its perversion. What is heresy? The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "Incredulity is the neglect of revealed truth or the willful refusal to assent to it. Heresy is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and Catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same; apostasy is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; schism is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him" (CCC 2089). This heresy about the person of Christ was initiated by Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, who denied Mary the title of *Theotokos* (Greek: "God-bearer" or, less literally, "Mother of God"). Nestorius claimed that she only bore Christ's human nature in her womb, and proposed the alternative title *Christotokos* ("Christ-bearer" or "Mother of Christ").

Many of our once believing Christians no longer believe that Christ died on the cross for the Redemption of the human race or that Christ Rose from the dead. Many Catholics no longer believe Christ instituted the Sacraments. There has been a loss of faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. One can look at the actions of some in Church to confirm that.

Rather than just point out problems, let me take it one step further. How is Re-Evangelization of our country to be done?

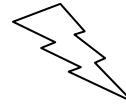
Well, this is easy to put in words but not easy to put into practice. Re-Evangelization is to be done the same way as Evangelization. Re-Evangelization is more demanding than evangelization of pagans. It is always harder to re-convert a former believer than it is to convert a non-Catholic to the Catholic Church. Re-Evangelization is more difficult because it is more costly in time, effort and energy and human resources. Pope Benedict XVI created a new Vatican office back in 2010 to Re-Evangelize the more secular areas of the globe.

We can restore the Catholic Faith in our country by doing five things.

1. **Re-learn our Catholic Faith.** The ignorance in allegedly learned circles of the Catholic Faith is abysmal.
2. **By living our Catholic Faith.** If we want to convert others then we better be living as bona fide Catholics ourselves. Why? Because people will say "If what you are telling me is true, why has it been lost on you?" St. Ignatius of Loyola was shrewd. He smiled when presenting the Faith to others. Be shrewd.
3. **We must PRAY our Catholic Faith.** Especially prayer before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.
4. **Share the Catholic Faith** using literature and other means to evangelize. Learn techniques. Be zealous. Pray for family and friends who have lost the Faith. Pray for sinners who have no one to pray for them. PRAY!
5. **Suffer.** We usually think of suffering *for* our Catholic faith. That is still true, but there is also such a thing as suffering *the* Catholic faith. Our Lord could not have been clearer. "If you wish to be my disciple you must take up your Cross daily and follow me." To be a Catholic means offering up our suffering that comes to us.

Part Two is next week. God bless you!

Lightning Apologetics



RE-EVANGELIZATION OF AMERICA II

What is pain? Whatever is contrary to the created will, or whatever is contrary to what we want. What is suffering? It is a rational experience of pain or the experience of pain by a rational being. What is most painful about pain is not necessarily the pain but it is the mind reflecting on the fact that I am suffering and that I have pain to begin with. The more I think about it the harder it becomes.

Every human being suffers but not everyone suffers willingly. So what is willing suffering? It is suffering that a person is willing to endure. We can't suffer without wanting to. We can offer our sufferings in union with those of Christ and then we have the answer to the pain we experience. We can offer that suffering for others. Many of the Saints willingly suffered for others and because they united it to Christ, gained great merit from it. That willingness to make sacrifices can help re-evangelize our country and world.

So when we talk about the New Evangelization and converting people to the Faith, it is not only suffering for the Faith but suffering the Faith; living a Faith which not only experiences suffering but offers that suffering they are going through and enduring it for the sake of others. Archbishop Sheen used to say that if you really wanted good spiritual direction then you need to go to someone who has suffered and offered that suffering to Christ for the sake of souls. It can't be learned in a book, only experience can teach it. The deepest joy in life is to choose to suffer for the love of God. You won't find that in Freud or in modern psychology. What I am trying to bring across is that by our suffering we evangelize those who have abandoned their faith.

It is the lives we live as Catholics that are the most powerful magnet for attracting other people to the Faith we profess but we have to profess it not just with our lips, no, but with our life, and patient and sacrificial loving because then we make sense to the unbelieving world that Christianity must be very deep: Look at what it does to human beings, it changes them from selfish persons to those who out of love for God even choose to suffer because they love Him!

Who is responsible for the Re-Evangelization of America?

The Catholic laity. Why? Well, there are six reasons:

1. The laity is empowered by the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation to evangelize and Re-Evangelize other people. Never in 2000 years of the Church's legislation have the rights and responsibilities of the laity be spelled out so much as at Vatican II.
2. The laity are the most numerous members of the Mystical Body of Christ. No one has to delegate or appoint you. We can evangelize immediately.
3. The laity are in direct contact and daily association with the de-Christianized world in which we live. The laity can have immediate impact on those with whom we are dealing.
4. The laity are in positions of influence in the world such as no priest could possibly be, i.e., in charge of newspapers, magazines, websites etc. They can use their influence and obtain money so they can use that money to be more powerful in sharing the Faith with others.
5. Laity realize as fathers and mothers of families and as persons in the world of business and politics how deeply the de-Christianization of America has become. They have no illusions.
6. The laity has the immediate experience of dealing with the secularized world in our day. They know how to cope with this world, how to affect it, how to change it with God's grace and how to convert it back to Jesus Christ. We have the power to influence. We have to do our part!

So in the times in which we live, let's let people see our Faith and how much we love Our Lord by how much we practice following Him in our daily life. Be zealous for the Faith. Pray for the virtue of Fortitude as we discussed it in five articles not long ago. Be a light to those around you, your family, your friends, your co-workers etc. Go to Holy Mass and Eucharistic adoration, pray the Rosary, meditate on the mysteries of our Faith, read the Scriptures, and let's get out of the mediocrity we are in. Souls are at stake. Put your light on a bushel so that all in the house may see it! God bless you.