

Missionary Families of Christ

THE MEANING OF EVANGELIZATION

Everything that we do is about evangelization. What is evangelization? It is the proclamation of the good news of Jesus to the world. Therefore, as MFC, our call and our thrust is evangelization. The word “evangelization” sums up who we are and what we are called to do. MFC is an evangelistic and missionary community, and all MFC members are to become evangelizers.

How does this happen? By a silent witness and also a verbal witness. First we evangelize by the witness of our lives, both personal and community. We live the way of Christ. This is walking the talk. Second, we evangelize by the witness of our mouths, through our programs and ministries. We proclaim Christ. This is talking the walk.

Evangelization is not necessarily recruitment

We seek to evangelize, not to recruit. We seek to save souls, not to chalk up numbers. But since evangelization is a continuing process, which does not stop even after someone has accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord, then we desire to bring in those we are evangelizing into a support environment that can help move them on to holiness of life, authentic discipleship and service to Christ. These support environments are the parishes, religious groups, lay associations, ecclesial communities, and of course MFC. For us, since MFC is providing the means by which we can become a holy people of God, it is natural for us to seek to bring people into MFC. As such, evangelizing them can continue in a deliberate and structured manner. This is where the aspect of “recruitment” comes in.

Evangelization comes in many different forms

There are the formal programs in the Church such as the Life in the Spirit Seminar and the MFC Christian Life Seminar (CLS). But since evangelization is proclaiming the good news of Jesus, then evangelization is also the many other works that people do in the name of Christ. For us, these are works such as building communities among the poor, our pro-life advocacy, and our service in our parishes. Ultimately, however, we look to the CLS as our primary means of starting the work of evangelization, because the CLS is the entry point to the fullness of community life and support.

As a response to the call to the New Evangelization, we also started the Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC) mission. This is separate and distinct from MFC, but is fully embraced by MFC and made its own. Its goal is to mainstream Catholic lay evangelization, by which Catholics, many of whom are lapsed, can meet Christ, live Christ and share Christ.

Evangelization and our Core Values

In doing whatever we are doing, being “centered on Christ” and consequently speaking about Christ is a must. This is what makes a work evangelization. Otherwise, it would just be a good

work, if we simply did good but did not witness to the Person who causes us to do good works. If our good work does not ultimately introduce a person to Christ, then it is still laudable good work (which Christians should do), but it is not evangelization.

Every MFC member is to have the mindset of being “evangelistic and missionary.” We evangelize in the ordinary day-to-day circumstances of our life (with relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, co-students, etc.). Further, every MFC member should be open to doing mission, which is to evangelize outside of one’s parish, province or country.

Our MFC evangelization is founded on family renewal and is “focused on the family.” It starts with one’s self, then radiates to the other members of the family. The home, being a small church, is where family members are formed and supported in the Christian life. In turn, the family and the home become the base for evangelistic work that we do in the larger society.

Evangelization is about “being community,” a group of people brought together by the Lord to be His instruments in doing His work in the world. We are nurtured in community, where the tools to growing in the Christian life are offered, where the call to holiness is seriously looked to, where the opportunity to serve others is provided, where brethren support each other to enter more deeply into the life of Christ. Community also brings together the varied spiritual gifts of members, together with human resources, to be able to do a more massive and effective work of evangelization in the larger society and in the world.

The very mission of Jesus is to bring good news to the poor (Lk 4:18). This has both spiritual and social dimensions. Our evangelization then takes us into the realm of “living a preferential option for the poor.” This is our work with the poor, of building the Church of the Poor.

Evangelizers follow in the footsteps of the Savior and Master, who is the One who sends us forth to the ends of the earth. We are the slaves of Jesus. Many of us will be called to leadership, and many will be used in the power of the Holy Spirit. But there is only one Master, and our work of evangelization necessitates “exercising servant leadership.” This is according to the teaching of Jesus, where the leader is the servant, where the greatest is the least of all.

Finally, our evangelization brings us to “being a servant to the Church,” through our work in parishes and dioceses. We are an integral part of the Roman Catholic Church. We do the very mission of Jesus, and the Church is the body of Christ on earth. We live out our call as a lay ecclesial community that is integrated in the life and mission of the Church. We make ourselves available for service in the parishes, especially in the areas of family and life.

(SG. Oct 7, 2019)