

**The Kingdom of God
and
The New Evangelization**

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Outline of these Sessions

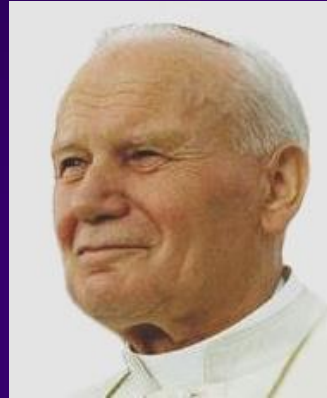
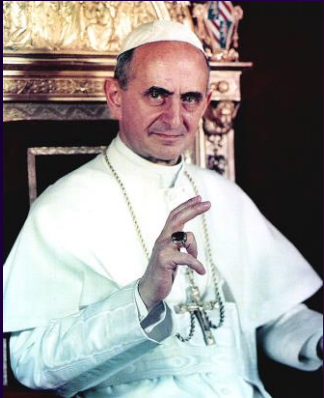
1. What is the New Evangelization?
 - What is **NEW** about the New Evangelization?
2. What is the Kingdom of God?
 - How does it relate to **Jesus**, the **Church** and **us**?
3. What are the key issues for preaching the Kingdom of God today?
 - Can we find a **new apologetic**?



*The time is fulfilled and
the Kingdom of God is
at hand.*

*Repent and believe the
Good News.*

What is the New Evangelization?



- Focus:
 - places with Christian roots
 - but which have lost a sense of the faith
- Duty of every believer
- Requires our own personal conversion

The Kingdom of God is ...

- All about the **King** – **Jesus**
 - Danger of reducing to merely secular values
- Old Testament
 - Initially God alone is King of Israel
 - Then: Saul – David – Solomon – division & conquest
 - Then: Messianic hope
- New Testament
 - Jesus reveals the kingdom in Himself
 - Jesus as Messiah / King
 - **Gentle** approach to win people's minds and hearts

Key Issues for Us Today

1. Journey of Conversion
2. New Apologetics
3. Structures and Programmes
4. Approach to Evangelization
5. Preparing Ourselves

1. The Journey of Conversion

- Uninterested outsider
- Interested outsider
- Thinking about things
- Wanting to engage positively
- Beginning to want to commit
- Making a commitment
- The life of belonging
- The life of mission / service
- Discovering & discerning personal vocation
- Living personal vocation ...

Ministry to People on the Journey

- Pre-evangelization
 - Welcome
 - Info on Catholicism
 - Basic Apologetics – answering common objections
- Evangelization
 - Proclaiming the *kerygma* = core message
- Catechesis
 - Deeper apologetics – justifying Christian belief
- RCIA
- Mystagogia

Ministry to People on the Journey

- Ongoing perfective catechesis
 - Intellectual
 - Spiritual
 - Human
 - Mission
- Mission / Vocation

Areas of Conversion

- Intellectual
 - knowledge
- Moral
 - behaviour
- Religious
 - spiritual and devotional life
- Personal / Affective
 - personal relationship with God

2. New Apologetics

- People want to be challenged with truth
 - rather than subjectivism
 - even if they react negatively!
- Must respond to **modern science**
 - presumption that science has disproved religion
 - or, at least, a convenient excuse
 - our response must be **confident** and **informed**
 - refute biblical literalism
 - the Galileo affair
 - Catholics **happily** accept the **Big Bang** and **evolution**

Cosmological Argument

- Everything in the universe needs explaining
 - that's the whole point of the laws of science
- The **universe itself** needs explaining
 - it obeys the laws of science too
 - the Big Bang is a scientific theory
- What made the Big Bang happen?

Design Argument

- Life needs explaining
 - that's the point of the theory of evolution
- The **basic** laws of nature are fine-tuned for life
 - “Anthropic Principle”
- What explains the fine-tuning?
 - The “multiverse” doesn't help
 - It's really only a bigger universe

Argument for the Human Soul



- Meaning of life
 - more than biology
- Free will
 - not determinism (we are all robots)
 - not randomness
 - not reducible to the laws of physics
- Consciousness – interior life

3. Structures and Programmes

- Something between **Nothing** and **Mass**
 - Last Supper at the very end of Jesus' ministry
 - Only for His closest followers

- Dismissal of catechumens after homily
 - *All you who are catechumens, depart.*
Catechumens, depart. All the catechumens depart.
Let no one of the catechumens remain.

Liturgy of St John Chrysostom

Structures and Programmes

- Alpha
 - Divine Renovation
 - Word on Fire
 - CaFE (Catholic Faith Exploration)
 - Etc.
-
- Liturgy
 - Keeping churches open
 - Electronic and printed resources

4. Approach to Evangelization



- Gentle – like Christ our King
- Welcome
- Befriending – inviting – accompanying
- Personal witness
- Being vulnerable
- Don't need to know all the answers
- *Win an argument, lose a soul*

5. Preparing Ourselves

- Need for personal conversion
 - at all levels
 - in all areas
- Prayer
- Pairs – you're not alone
- Do not be afraid
- Expect failure!

Where can we get inner strength?

- Prayer
- Fasting
- Almsgiving
- Eucharist
- Frequent Confession
- One another
- Christ our King
- Expect Success too!

Questions for Discussion

- What struck you this evening?
 - what did you agree / disagree with?
 - what made you feel motivated / excited?
 - did anything make you feel anxious / inadequate?
- What might Jesus be saying to us?
 - or to you personally (maybe keep this private)?
- What are the key issues for us in E&F?
- What are the key opportunities for us in E&F?



*Lord, the Word who is Life,
May all the people of our
diocese grow in openness
to the power of the Holy
Spirit, so that through a
growth in understanding
and courage, and truly
open to your call, we may
bear powerful witness to all
around us, for you are Lord
for ever and ever. Amen.*