

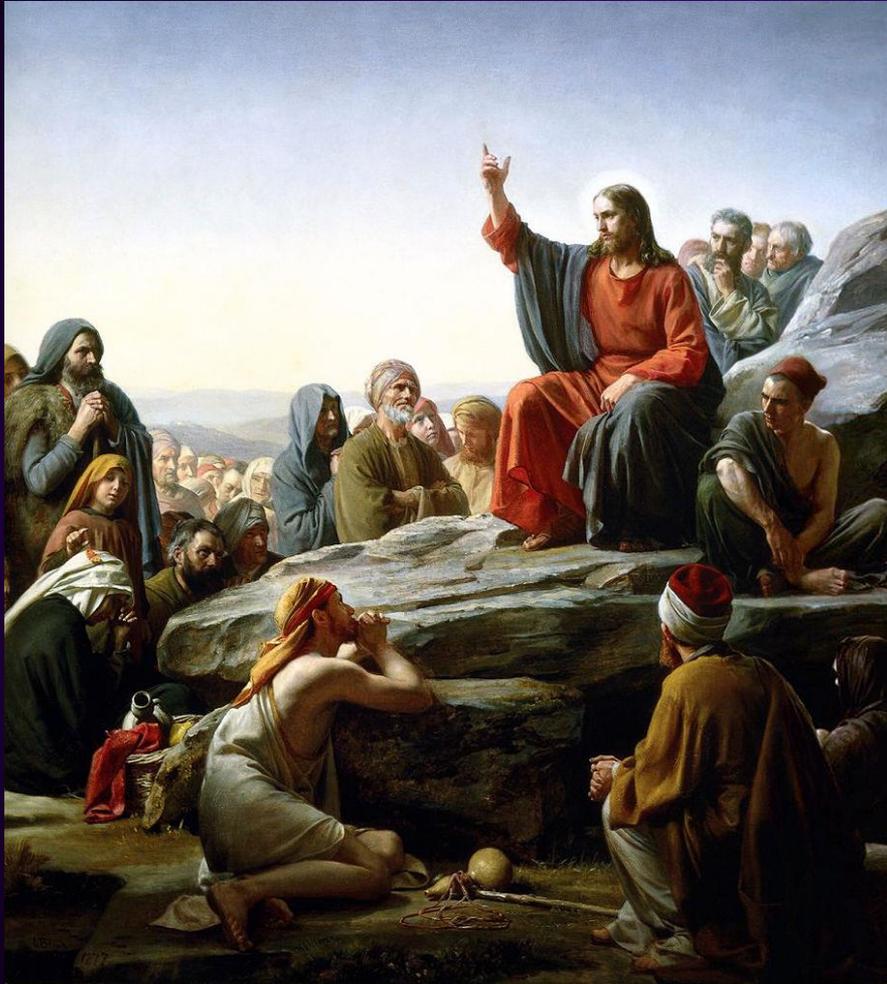
**The Kingdom of God  
and  
The New Evangelization**

Effingham and Fetcham

Advent 2018

# Outline of these Sessions

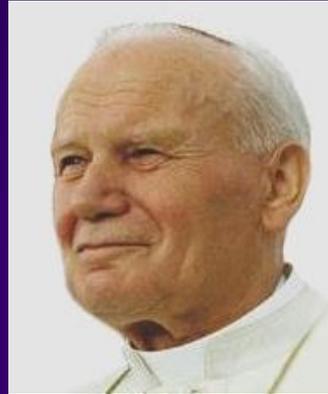
1. What is the New Evangelization?
  - What is **NEW** about the New Evangelization?
2. What is the Kingdom of God?
  - How does it relate to **Jesus**, the **Church** and **us**?
3. What are the key issues for preaching the Kingdom of God today?
  - Can we find a **new apologetic**?



*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.*