

## Evangelism and Holy Spirit.

Is there a relationship between them?



The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, about 2000 years ago on the disciples of Jesus, in order to enable them to witness all over the world.

To witness of what? Of the good news, of the victory of Jesus Christ on the power of sin and death in this world. Through the Spirit of Christ, the disciples became able to speak with authority and to invite many to faith in Jesus. Before receiving the Spirit, the disciples did not have the courage, power or love that would shake the world and overcome Empires. After Pentecost, Peter witnessed with boldness of the love of Jesus, the Apostles went to the far ends of the world and shared this wonderful message of hope and life. The Spirit is like the wind, we don't see it, but we still feel clearly its effects. One of the great effects of the Holy Spirit is to give courage, peace and wisdom to Christians who follow the steps of their dear master Jesus, inviting their friends to know the one who gives the only true life, God the Creator of the universe and his beloved Son Jesus Christ.

I don't speak of my faith to my friend  
because she/he has no interest  
in Christianity.



Speaking of our faith is sometimes a difficult thing. We have to remember that if someone is not interested in what we say, it is of no use to give a 'reluctant witness' of our faith.

But there is an important point to consider and to pray about: how to arouse the interest of a friend for Jesus? There are many ways to give rise to interest. Jesus said: you are the salt of the earth. The salt gives taste to what we eat, as we Christians are invited to give meaning to all we experience in this life.

When Jesus met a Samaritan woman, he spoke to her with kindness and brought her to realize she was lacking something. Even if she had already married five husbands, she was not satisfied by the love and life she had – something was missing. Once she came to acknowledge this need, she began to ask important questions: how to worship, is Jesus the promised Messiah? Then Jesus answered her questions and this simple woman became a humble and powerful witness of Jesus in her entire village.

We are thus invited to discover how, by love for our friends, we can creatively awaken their interest for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Do you love your friends enough  
to share with them Jesus your Savior and Lord?



Evangelism and love are not opposed but deeply related. We could say that evangelism is an important expression of our love for our friends and relatives. If we care for what happens to our friends today, how much more are we invited to care for them for the coming life.

Instead of being a matter of techniques, evangelism is a matter of heart. It is a manifestation of our love for God and of our relationship with Him. Through the times of communion with our God, we discover His love for us and how much He is important for all the moments we live. He is the one who created us, who gives us food and clothes, who is always close to us and gives meaning even to our times of suffering. How could we keep such a loving God away from our friends?

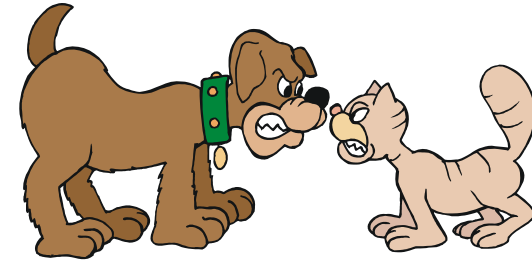
It is possible that we come to discover our faith is shallow. We are then invited to recognize how much we need to become deeper disciples instead of hiding the void of our lives on the pews of a church. Whatever our situation, the divine challenge of evangelism has many blessings under its wings.

Love my neighbor?

*OK, but it's hard.*

Love my enemy?

*Should we really go that far?*



Through our relationships with personal enemies, we are invited to receive and manifest the power of God's love, a powerful part of evangelism. God's grace helps us not only to remain in peace when situations are tough, but also to manifest His love through us. Paul wrote in the Epistle to the Romans: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:20-21)

Loving someone who does not love you is a deep witness of God's love. This shows that hatred and violence are not spreading like a contagious disease, but rather that love is victorious over hatred – the first and decisive victory being won in your heart. Then your enemy will either realize he is violent without reason or even learn from you the wonderful good news of a love stronger than hatred. This victory of God's love is really good news, rooted in the sacrifice of our dear Lord Jesus Christ.



## What is the Great Commission?

The great commission is the command Jesus gave to his followers, which is found at the end of the gospel of Matthew:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

This command of Jesus is a command of transmitting his love to the world. By telling the good news of Jesus Christ - his victory over death and sin, we are precious tools in the hand of our loving God – tools of light in a world of darkness.

This great commission implies not only a personal witness, but also to invite our dear ones who don't know Jesus personally to become disciples – to be baptized and to obey all he commanded us. It is important to stress that a disciple who does not obey is not a disciple.

## Are there still fishers of men today?



Jesus called the apostle Peter to be a fisher of men. It was a call to preach the good news and to bring Jews and later Gentiles to call on the name of Jesus and to follow his way.

Today, in the church, we still need new Peters who not only receive the call but dare to answer yes, and take the risk of announcing the gospel in new contexts.

Peter was not a Bible scholar, he was a simple man. Evangelism requires more simplicity than any other thing. It requires also humility and faith, the humility to recognize that we are not able to convert a single person by our own strength, and the faith that Jesus can touch others through us. Bringing someone to Christ is also one of the deepest joys one can experience on this earth, the joy of seeing the grace of God at work in this world, the joy of being a simple servant in the hand of a gracious Lord.

What about you? Is Jesus calling you to be a fisher of men?