

## Liturgy Matters: Evangelization

The continuing story of salvation in Christ involves each of us one by one as well as society itself. How else could it be? Conversion speaks of the change of heart that, as a member of the Church, each one must undergo. The Gospel speaks across time and space to each human being, each mind, each heart. It asks us what we think about our lives, how we hope, whom we love, and what we live for. If faith is not transforming each heart and life, it is dead.

But faith is not something that only happens to each of us individually or privately, within ourselves. The Gospel also speaks to society itself, with its values, goals, and systems. The Gospel must overflow from each heart until the presence of God transforms all human existence. Sometimes this means that, as believers, we must confront the world as did the prophets of old, pointing out the claims of God to societies that are blind to God. More often, however, this means that we must let our faith shine on the world around us, radiating the love of Jesus by the everyday way we speak, think, and act.

The fruits of evangelization are changed lives and a changed world—holiness and justice, spirituality and peace. The validity of our having accepted the Gospel does not only come from what we feel or what we know; it comes also from the way we serve others, especially the poorest, the most marginal, the most hurting, the most defenseless, and the least loved. An evangelization that stays inside ourselves is not an evangelization into the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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