

## LITURGY MATTERS

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### The Kingdom

Why do Catholics care about evangelization at all? Why do we worry that the “message is not being spread,” or that the “faith is not being lived?”

While it might be quite characteristic of Catholic individualism today to note that a dozen different Catholics might give a dozen different answers to these questions (and some, unfortunately, might even say that they don’t care whether messages get spread or faith gets lived at all), the fundamental framework for all Catholic evangelization is the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God provides the basic dynamic of Catholic evangelization. Without the Kingdom, and our adherence to it, there cannot be energy for evangelization or, indeed, for the full scope of Christian life.

Before we wrap our personal imaginations around this word *Kingdom*, with our myriad tendencies to color its image with armies, flags, trumpets and other military insignia, we need to locate ourselves in the personal imagination of Jesus Christ, for no one can doubt that the notion of the Kingdom of God was central to his life and teaching. In fact, the idea of “Kingdom” can be viewed as the central metaphor of the Gospels, precisely because it was the framework, the context, out of which Jesus lived and thought.

Perhaps we can, without getting into a whole theology of the Kingdom of God – which would be very nuanced and long – simply point to three distinct moments in the life of Jesus: the call of the first disciples, the feeding of the multitude and the commissioning of the apostles before his ascension. These three moments, lined up in a row, make a line that extends forward in time and outward in space with such universal importance that they encompass our Catholic life today and point to a vision of Jesus whose vastness is the context for all evangelizing activity.

For the next few weeks we will look at these three points.

*. . . Let’s walk together as disciples in the footsteps of the Lord.*

