



EVANGELIZING

New Vision - New Directions

CATECHESIS

2016 Reflections

Article 2. Evangelization and Catechesis

by Sara Blauvelt

I had the great pleasure of being a student of Sr. Kate Dooley, and in this *Evangelization and Catechesis* article I hear echoes of the insights gleaned in her classroom. In this short response I draw attention to two insights that seem particularly valuable reminders to me fifteen years later.

First, the inter-related nature of evangelization and catechesis is more evident than ever. It is no longer necessary to strike out to foreign lands to encounter entire groups of individuals who have never heard the Gospel proclaimed or never experienced relationship with Jesus Christ. Today we have generations of baptized Catholics who are nominally catechized and need the initial and essential Gospel message proclaimed anew. This highlights the first point: ***No one comes to faith alone***. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us of this reality: “You did not give yourself faith—you received it as one link in a great chain.” (CCC, 166). As Sr. Kate so aptly points out: “Indeed it is a challenge to know for oneself what it means to be a Catholic Christian.” In our culture of individualism, it is all the more essential that we work to be links in the great chain that draw others closer to Christ.

The second point is the necessity for Christians ***to develop a sacramental worldview in which their identity as members of the Body of Christ can be formed and nurtured***. Sr. Kate points out: “Paschal Mystery is not only the core of faith but the paradigm of our lives—it allows us to see ordinary events through the lens of faith.” Without this lens, this horizon, it is impossible to navigate the world and its challenge with any reference to God. Through the Paschal Mystery, what we profess in turn illuminates our lives, our words, our actions and missionary spirit. What is necessary is both a primary, joyful proclamation that is followed by lifelong formation that seeks to draw the believer ever deeper into the mysteries of faith while at the same time sending them out to transform the world through word and witness.

A final thought draws from the reflection on the parable of the Sower and the Seed which is offered by the *General Directory for Catechesis* as the parable for preaching the Gospel in the contemporary world. In reading this parable do you focus on the barren soil? Sr. Kate does not! I draw missionary strength from her witness as she says: “The parable of the sower is a story of hope and encouragement. It is a reminder that evangelization is the action of God working through the Spirit.”

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helping children and adults grow in their faith and relationship with Christ and His Church, she has served in catechetical ministry for 20 years.