



WINNOWING FAN

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NEW EVANGELIZATION

PART THIRTY

The entirely 'NEW EVANGELIZATION'

Definition of words.

Everybody is using the words 'New Evangelization' and giving it new man-made meanings. Even a theological school in Italy described it as the way towards a new man-made Catholic Church. If we are not attentive to Pope Benedict's presentation of doctrines we ourselves would be confused. For the Pope, himself, said that the 'New Evangelization' is not really new. It is the old classical and traditional evangelization. So which is the old and which is the 'new' evangelization?

Using the explanations of the Holy Father let us remember the structure and contents of evangelization he had already mentioned. Now let us see the differences between the three evangelizations.

Firstly, Christ ordered the Apostles to evangelize and lead souls towards Faith in what we call the Apostolic Commission found in the end of St. Matthew's Gospel. Let us describe this as 'Traditional Evangelization.' The instructions He gave and the description of this process is very simple and clear from the Gospels and equally clearly explained by the Fathers of the Church like St. Augustine. Though both the intellect and free will are involved in the

Act of Faith, the Will is given importance.....which St. Thomas distinguished from the free will. The first monastic evangelizers like St. Boniface, St. Augustine and St. Patrick used this, resulting in great conversions.

The monk-evangelizer sought holiness within the monasteries. He would occasionally leave the monastery for a moment to evangelize other souls but would return immediately to the monastery. In fact, in the case of St. Boniface, he brought the whole monastery with him while preaching so as not to leave it at all. The whole monastery was martyred.

Secondly, around the middle ages, the Catholic Church discovered philosophy and used it as a handmaid of theology. The structure and contents are still the same as above. The faculty of the soul that is given importance is both the intellect and the will. But the intellect first and afterwards the Will. Let us describe this as 'Modern Evangelization'. Here the monk evangelizer worked for holiness within the monastery. To preach, however, he went out of the monastery and stayed out, even in mission lands to evangelize other souls, like St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic. St. Thomas of Aquinas was first a Benedictine in Monte Casino so he knew the 'traditional evangelization.' But he was pulled out by his family and eventually joined the Dominicans where he learned the 'modern evangelization.' So he was acquainted with both. Today, neither 'traditional' nor 'modern'

evangelization is taught in seminaries and nobody seems to know either.

There is nothing wrong with the 'modern evangelization'. The two above evangelizations are directed in teaching the intellect and the will. Except the 'traditional evangelization' emphasized the act of the will without disregarding the act of the intellect; while the 'modern evangelization' emphasized the act of the intellect—thus the flourishing of theology in that era.

Today, Pope Benedict is using the word 'new evangelization'. And he says he is referring to the 'traditional evangelization' and the 'modern evangelization' put together and brought up to date. The structure and contents of this 'new' is still identical with the two above. Except that now the evangelizer whom Pope Benedict described as a contemplative must be one who still is working for his holiness within the monastery. And unlike the two above, he sends assistants outside into the world where souls are invited to enter the monastery where the contemplative community evangelizes the soul. The evangelized is faced with the living example of an entire community. The work of evangelization is such that both the evangelizer and the evangelized are within the monastery. Pope Benedict, using the words of St. Bonaventure calls this NEW MONASTICISM. This is not taught in seminaries and like the two above nobody seems to know this, too, unless by a very special act of God.

This concept of 'new evangelization' conforms to the evangelizing image of



the Catholic Church as portrayed by the Woman of the Apocalypse in the Book of Revelation and as described by St. Thomas of Aquinas in his commentary to the last chapter of the Gospel of St. John. Here St. John described the last fishing trip of the Apostles in lake Tiberias after the resurrection of Christ.... when the boat of Peter was now approaching the shore where Christ was waiting with a banquet.

So when Pope Benedict announced the 'new evangelization' that combined the traditional and modern forms, few seems to have understood it. And when he added that this must be made up to date it even sounded more Greek to most. This lack of understanding to what the Holy Father is teaching shows a lack of Faith. Thus the Crisis of Faith. This absence of Faith can be seen from statements made by lay members of ecclesial communities, from the problems of priests, from the poor preaching of bishops and cardinals, and from statements from heads of congregations in Rome. It even shows in the 58 proposals made by the recently concluded Bishop's Synod in Rome raising the accusation that the Synod cannot claim collegiality with the Pope because they were so unlike the Apostles in collegiality with Peter.

Pope Benedict in his thesis saw that St. Bonaventure thought that 1200 was the time for the 'new evangelization.' But St. Bonaventure, himself, saw that it was not the time and did not try it and settled with the 'modern'. Blessed John Newman, also, thought that the 1800 was the time for the 'new

evangelization.' And actually tried it both in Ireland and in Little More. But he, himself, saw that it was not the time. And settled with the 'traditional.' The Holy Father believes today is the time for the 'new evangelization.' And if we have faith we must think with him and find out why he thinks so.

We are almost half way through the 'Year of Faith.' And the 58 proposals from the Bishop's Synod had not yet been approved by the Pope as of this writing. Though most bishops and priests are already preaching these unapproved proposals. The Holy Father has shown clearly the right path to Faith with hundreds of other voices pointing elsewhere. The Year of Faith invites us to enter this 'New Evangelization' for to work outside its parameters is to work outside the Church.

THE LOVE OF GOD

St. Bernard of Clairvaux writes: we should love God without measure for two reasons: nothing is more reasonable and nothing is more profitable. If one asks why God deserves our love, the primary reason is because he first loved us. Should not he be loved in return especially when we think who loved, whom he loved and how much he loved?

So it was God who loved us, loved us both freely and while yet we were enemies.

SERMON *in a sentence*

Man is induced to be merciful by the example of Divine mercy.

Just as the fire acts with greater force on what is near than on what is distant, so too, charity loves with greater fervor those who are united to us than those who are far removed.

When we pray we ought to ask for what we ought to desire. Now we ought to desire good things not only for ourselves, but also for others: for this is essential to the love which we owe to our neighbor.... Charity requires us to pray for others.

Temporal riches do not avail for the salvation of man in the day of judgment.

Eternal riches are to be sought for three reasons: (1) on account of their truth, for they are true riches... (2) on account of their joyousness... (3) on account of eternity: "But the just shall live for evermore."

None need be fearful of poverty who have acquired the riches of wisdom.

The riches of this world are not true riches.... The crowns of the saints are to be earnestly sought for.

The saints live not after the fashion of the world... The dignity of the saints is so great because they are not of this world, but "of the household of God."

In this life no man can fulfill his desires, nor can any creature satisfy a man's craving, for God alone satisfies and infinitely surpasses man's desire, which for that reason is never at rest except in God.

Take note that whatever man seeks in this world, he will find it more perfect and more excellent in God alone. If you seek delight, you will find supreme delight in God.... Do you seek wealth? You will find in Him all you desire in abundance.

He made man for a certain purpose; but not for the sake of material pleasures, since dumb animals have them, but that he may have eternal life. For it is the Lord's will that man have eternal life.

St. Thomas Aquinas

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