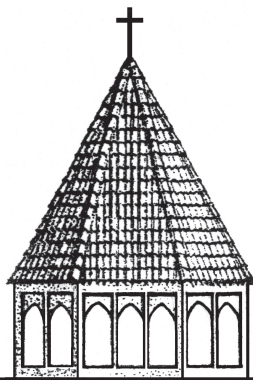


# WINNOWING FAN

The Spiritual Life according to the Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church in preparation for Christ's Second Coming.

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## NEW EVANGELIZATION

PART ONE

### 1. Evangelization

The Bishop's conference for this month had just ended and a few of them were my guests for a picnic. And they were talking about their meetings. No secrets were, of course, divulged. During the course of the conversation, I asked them about "Porta Fidei" and what plans do they have in the Diocesan level. When someone blurted out : what is the difference between the "New Evangelization" that everybody is talking about and the Old Evangelization. And they agreed: "We don't know the difference." Of course, I also did not know. In fact nobody should know the difference because there should be no difference between the Old and the New

Evangelization. What we really have is the "new Evangelization" of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI and the WRONG Evangelization which was the result of the bad implementation of the decrees of the Council of Trent,... exactly what is happening now after Vatican II....there are so many bad post interpretation of the documents that Pope Benedict had to reform the reform.

### 2. Moral Theology after Trent

After the Council of Trent, one of the great Church councils, the fathers, like all other councils, made very good documents correcting errors or explaining truths for further clarification. After the Council,

Commissions were assigned to interpret and implement the documents. But in the Council of Trent, though all the documents were orthodox, something went wrong in the implementation of the degrees on Moral theology, in which the catechisms are based. The suspect is the heresy of Nominalism that plagued the Church before the Council and which eventually influenced Moral theology. This corrupted all manuals of Moral theology during the implementation of the decrees of the Council. And since catechisms are based on Moral Theology, the error entered into the Catechisms of the Catholic Church.

The three branches of Theology, namely Dogmatic, Moral and Ascetical should be integrated as one whole, one greatly influencing the other. After Trent, the three branches were divorced from each other. Without one the other two would collapse, while each branch would not be able to attain its goal. Without Dogma Morals do not know why acts were immoral, without Morals Ascetical becomes meaningless and irrelevant. Without Morals and Ascetical one cannot believe the Dogmas. Without Ascetical and Moral Theology, a soul cannot believe in the Dogmas like that there is a God. And as Bishop Gasser said, explaining the importance in being able to believe in God, without this primal truth man becomes a moral pervert. Virtually the Catholic Church disappeared from the face of the earth. But this is impossible because in such a situation

God always intervenes in a direct way and teaches chosen souls personally and directly Dogma, Morals and Ascetical theology. And so we see saints raised by God whose incredible knowledge we don't know where it came from. This is how God maintains the existence of the Church in such situations. But with most of the bishops and priests part of this collapse, the faithful would be in the same situation. And this is, indeed, a very sad situation.

3. Cardinal Ratzinger points at the defect. All the subsequent Popes noticed something was bugging the Church since that time but could not pinpoint it. And so all of them gave the right solution, as their office made them competent to do, without exposing the virus that was plaguing the Church. It was providential, only in preparing for Vatican II that a Commission of international brilliant theologians were gathered as advisers to the Council that they discovered the virus. One of the periti was Joseph Ratzinger. In 2001, addressing Religion teachers and catechists in New York, he first coined the word "New Evangelization". It was used before but Ratzinger popularized it. He pointed out there was a need for a "New Evangelization" because there was a defect with the way catechism was being taught. The defect was in the method and in the contents. Now wait a minute. If I had a recipe for 'Mexican tamales' which contains both the procedure or method of making it and a list of the ingredients....

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and suddenly someone changes the method of cooking it and the ingredients it should contain, I'll be having a peanut butter sandwich rather than a 'tamales.' To modify both the method of teaching religion and its contents would produce a Protestant sect not a Catholic Religion. This was what Cardinal Ratzinger was saying.

#### 4. True Evangelization based on the Apostolic Commission

The Catholic Church knows very well the way to Evangelize. It is found in the Apostolic Commission, the instruction Christ gave to the Apostles at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel. If we read the commentary St. Augustine and St. Thomas of Aquinas gave to that text, it is exactly the "New Evangelization" of Pope Benedict XVI. There is no difference. So why is there a "New Evangelization?" Because what had been used before and still found in Manuals of Moral Theology and Catechisms today is WRONG Evangelization. It is different from the Apostolic Commission that Christ gave the Apostles.

#### 5. The Traditional, Classical Evangelization.

In fact Cardinal Ratzinger, in his speech, mentioned the fact that this "New Evangelization" is nothing else than the classical or traditional Evangelization Christ taught the first Apostles. Before we discuss the schema Pope

Benedict enumerated let us look at the three general points that he mentioned regarding the New Evangelization that is no different from a treatise of St. Thomas of Aquinas on Evangelization. Firstly, the Evangelizer should review his Dogma, Morals and Ascetical theology. Secondly, the Evangelizer must be a contemplative. Thirdly, the Evangelizer must have a 'new heart.' In the early times, these three always went together. But not now so the 'New Evangelization.'

First, Pope Benedict during the Year of the Priest told all priest to go back to the seminary and review their Moral Theology. If something went wrong with the way priests learned how to Evangelize, it is but natural that they return to the seminary and relearn how to do it. "Veritatis Splendor" enumerated the right way and the wrong way of Evangelizing. A study of the Compendium of the Catholic Catechism by Pope Benedict would be a perfect text for study, the Pope reminds us. Moral Theology had to be relearned because Ascetical theology and the catechism are based on Moral Theology. An error in Morals will corrupt the ascetical life and the catechism used for strengthening the Faith. I wonder how many priests returned to the seminary during the 'Year of the Priest.' Dogma and Morals should be learned as roads that lead to Asceticism. The Evangelizing priest must be a Theologian and a Saint.

#### 6. What is "New?"

Not the Evangelization but the Evangelizer must be new. He must have a "new heart", Pope Benedict states. All Evangelizers, should renew their minds so they can renew their hearts. If something went wrong in the curriculum the mind must be renewed. This is required of all laymen who love to preach. Acquired knowledge should be a minimum requirement. This includes learning the Theology of History ( just like the Pope's Thesis.) Though this is still very inferior compared to infused knowledge.

#### 7. Only contemplatives should preach.

The third point Pope Benedict raised as necessary for the "New Evangelization" is that the Evangelizer should be a contemplative. His natural knowledge of the truth (this time correctly learned by integrating Dogma, Morals and Ascetical theology) must be consented to by his free will. This transforms his acquired knowledge into infused knowledge which comes along with infused Faith. The Pope mentioned this in the "Year of the Priests". "Contemplata, aliis tradere." It is based on the doctrine that the teachings of the Catholic Church are supernatural in nature and nobody can know, understand nor teach them unless they are in the supernatural level, that is in the level of Faith....at least. That is the stage of contemplation where knowledge is infused and not learned from seminaries. And only after receiving the theological virtue of

Faith can we share the Faith with others. Only contemplatives can share the Faith because they have it. The Dominicans had made this teaching of St. Augustine and St. Thomas as their motto. But most seminarians had never heard that they have to be contemplatives to Evangelize. They have not even heard how one can become a contemplative. The Pope is insistent: the Evangelizer must be a contemplative. This had been the teaching of the Church from the time of Christ up to.....well, until it just dissappeared.... until the then Cardinal Ratzinger mentioned it. The Virtue of Faith and the contemplative life are synonymous. There goes the excuse of the Diocesan clergy that contemplation is not part of their training. Now it should be.

This is the heart of Evangelization and described by the Holy Father using the words of St. Augustine. What is New? The heart of the one who proclaims. He must be one who is totally in love with the Lord, one who has satiated his thirst in the Word of God. He must be acquainted with the One he is preaching about. And that acquaintance can only be attained by unceasing prayer. An Evangelizer has to be like a St. Thomas of 'Aquinas combining perfect knowledge of Dogma and Morals and putting both into practice into asceticism.....the result is holiness. In the New Evangelization, it is the Evangelizer who should be NEW.