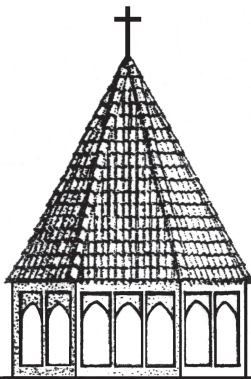


# WINNOWING FAN

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 TWO

1. The Holy Father has been repetitious about the importance of Faith, a theological virtue we cannot attain with our natural efforts, a virtue that can come from God alone. And his 'New Evangelization' is the way to learn to be worthy of it.

The treatise of Cardinal Ratzinger is divided into two parts enumerating the two defects of current Evangelizations: the first defect is in the structure and method of teaching and he gives the corrections. The second defect is in the contents of what is taught. And he also gives the correct contents.

Let us see the first defect and Ratzinger's solution. In the next article we shall see the second defect and Ratzinger's solution.

With regard to the first defect: The Holy Father had mentioned that a crisis had entered the Church around the 17th century as a result of the many catechisms of different nationalities that preached their own nationalistic, culturistic interpretations of Catholic Doctrines. Prompted by Nominalism and later on by Modernism, the training of all priests was corrupted so that the Doctrines taught were influenced by nationalistic cultures subjective in

nature. Certain doctrines were actually eliminated like the theology of grace (which he said should be the first foundation of Evangelization), the proper order of doctrines to be taught where changed....and with this jambalaya of Catholic doctrines, we are suddenly faced with a morality and asceticism that cannot bring us to heaven....an engine that does not work.

This state of affairs was evident in the 17th century and vocally discussed during Vatican II especially during the discussion of 'Dei Verbum'. Archbishop Ganner during the discussion insisted on the OATH against modernism imposed on all priests during the time of "Pascendi" — the Oath that all seminarians were supposed to make before ordination. This was no longer observed during Vatican II. While the Council Fathers insisted that it should be revived....nobody seems to have done it. The Oath is an act of natural faith in which, hopefully, the supernatural virtue of Faith that makes us Catholics and guarantees our salvation may be built on. Remember, it is only a natural Faith that is required of all candidates for ordination. Is that too much to ask? The Popes were not even requiring supernatural faith because only God can give that.

Pope Benedict, in his 'Porta Fidei' wants us to check if we have

supernatural Faith, which we cannot have without natural faith. And during the Year of the Priest and several times afterwards, he insisted that priests, to be effective Evangelizers have to be contemplatives....which means having not only Faith but also Hope and Charity.

The goal for this year is to encourage all Catholics to check if they have the one, true, Catholic Faith. And the Holy Father is directing this to 'former Catholics' rather than to the missio ad gentes, for Charity begins at home. The success of missio ad gentes is completely dependent on whether those preaching have the theological virtue of Faith. But the focus of the New Evangelization is directed towards Catholics who have lost their faith or had never made the act of Faith. And for the priest Evangelizers to have true Faith.

2. A truth we often forget is that the teachings of Christ are supernatural truths that can only be learned by souls who have received sanctifying grace, had received the gift of Faith from God and through the gifts of the Holy Spirit have learned the teachings of Christ.

3. The dynamics on how to reach Faith had not been taught in the seminaries. So there is the great possibility that

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could to solve the evils that beset the Church."  
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many seminarians had been ordained faithless. The Pope mentioned that priests should be contemplatives. The words Faith and contemplative are the same.

There are two kinds of contemplatives. The theological contemplative and the infused contemplative that is the result of grace. The Holy Father is only insisting on being a theological contemplative because no one can become a contemplative by grace except by the work of God. And the theological contemplative is one who has seriously studied Dogma, Morals and Ascetical theology: something the Pope required all priests to do during the "Year of the Priest". If they study these in the proper way they could easily be worthy to receive infused contemplation which, of course, is superior.

4. To deserve to receive the gift of Faith, a soul must have finished his repentance, developed the four moral virtues and received the gift of Faith that makes him a contemplative. A contemplative is often described as a prophet in the classical way. St. Thomas of Aquinas describes a prophet as one who had first undergone an interior experience of what he is to reveal. So the prophet leaves the secrecy of his contemplation to preach to the outside. The preacher must draw from

contemplation what he should then preach to others. This is an act of Charity on his part. St. Thomas describes this as an act of friendship that is active and generous.

5. In the early times, the monks were the best missionaries, like St. Boniface, St. Augustine and St. Patrick. Essentially they were laymen who entered the monasteries to acquire the saving virtue of Faith by way of contemplation. So there is nothing new about the New Evangelization. Contemplation, however, is no longer emphasized in the training for the priesthood, neither in the diocesan nor in the religious. And so the complete ineffectiveness of former Evangelizations.

6. This is why the Holy Father through the New Evangelization has been exhorting us to pray. The prayer he is advancing is contemplation. Earlier the Pope described prayer as a friendly conversation with God in order to know Him. How can we preach Christ to others if we have not known him through prayer.

7. The New Evangelization is New because it is a secret that God would like to share with His friends, not His servants. So we have to receive the words of Christ "Now I call you

friends" before we can share the secrets of the Father and the Holy Spirit which is the content of the New Evangelization. These secrets are not found anywhere except through the personal revelation of God through Christ. And this is shared by God with friends only, i.e., with contemplatives.

The Pope added that in the "New Evangelization" the Evangelizer must be two or more united in Christ, i.e., a community united in Charity. And the object of Evangelization must be one, not a thousand. That is a two to one ratio; two evangelizers to one evangelized. The disciples were sent by Christ two by two, St. Paul always had a partner in preaching. But when Christ began to lead each of his disciples into the life of Faith, He led them one by one. This was taught by Pope Benedict in Puebla, Mexico where he reminded the Bishops that Evangelization is a personal approach. A one to one basis. We should not be impatient, he said, in trying to bring in souls by the hundreds or thousands. That is not God's way. Though the one approached is one, the one approaching, the Evangelizer, must be two or more, or a community.

The "New Evangelization" requires this of the Evangelizer. He must be a soul who has reached Faith, Hope and Charity and, therefore, he loves God,

himself and his neighbor. Since he has to preach the same message of love of God and neighbor, when he speaks he must show how to love his neighbor, who must be around. The community whom the preacher loves and who in turn loves the preacher must be around to show how to love one's neighbor: something the preacher cannot show if he preaches alone. Without this loved neighbor and the preacher who loves the Evangelization will be completely ineffective. St. Thomas of Aquinas demands at least the presence of benevolence or love of friendship, both of which are natural loves, to exist between evangelizer and companion or community. When Christ preached, He had His Apostolic community whom HE loved and who loved Him; so they could preach the love of God and neighbor....which many preachers today cannot show. "Two or three gathered in the name of Christ" must be the description of the preacher and his companion or community, and Christ promised He will be in their midst to accomplish the work of conversion.

This is the method and structure which Pope Benedict described as lacking in today's Evangelization, rendering it useless and ineffective. And this is the first thing that must be observed in the New Evangelization.

