

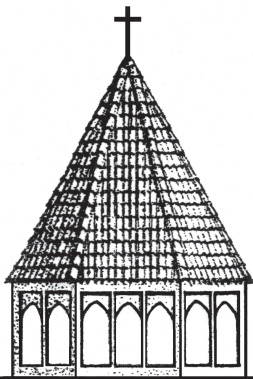


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St. Teresa of Avila

The *Winnowing Fan* hopes "...to do what little it
could to solve the evils that beset the Church."

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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
SIXTEEN

'CONVERSION' - the first step in the
'New Evangelization' that leads to 'Porta
Fidei.'

"Conversion' that leads to Faith.
Another way of saying this is
'Evangelization' that leads to Faith. Pope
Benedict referred to it as "New
Evangelization" that leads to Faith. And
the steps of Evangelization that leads to
Faith are: Conversion, entrance to the
Kingdom of God, encounter with Jesus
Christ and Union with the Holy Spirit.
The result of all these is attainment of

'Eternal Life.'

Christ came to earth to teach us the way
to eternal life. And this Way of life had
been entrusted to the Apostles and
eventually to the Catholic Church
through her official spokesman the
Pope. And the present Pope, like all
other Popes is doing his duty of making
sure that all the souls under his
Pontificate know exactly 'The Way'
without error.

This is especially true today where
everything seems to be on the decline,
and as the Pope mentioned, 'there is no

way of stopping it.' The only imminent
thing that we can look forward to is
OUR DEATH, either through the revolt
of nature against rebelling mankind or
man's inhumanity to men. And there is
no way to prepare for such an
eventuality except to make sure that we
have FAITH that leads to Eternal Life.
With the ways things are going there is
no other future.

Pope Benedict has not stopped repeating
this topic in all his talks to show the
importance of FAITH. In fact if we
gather all his addresses on the subject
there was no need for a Bishop's Synod.
He had spelled out everything necessary
for the attainment of Faith. Pope Pius
XII, when confronted with the
suggestion to call an Ecumenical
Council to face the enormous problems
of his Pontificate, including a raging
global war, answered NO. God has
given the Popes the light to give the
solution. Whether men will accept it or
not is another question. Pope Benedict
had given us the solution to all the
world's problems today: 'New
Evangelization' that leads to Faith.
FAITH that conquers the world.....is the
solution. Without Faith, there is no other
solution and the world's total decline is
inevitable. And since the Holy Father
sees that the world will not listen, not
even amongst the Catholics, his last
advice is: 'Stop saving the world. You
can't. What is happening is Divine

Justice. Just concentrate in preparing
your souls by taking the proper steps
necessary that lead to FAITH.

But the evil spirits are also active. In
fact, too active. Dark clouds are
appearing at the horizon of the Bishop's
Synod. The Lineamenta issued from the
Vatican to the Bishops is sounding an
unclear bugle call, as St. Paul would
describe it. The Instrumentum Laboris,
a compilation of the responses of all the
Bishop's of the world is also an unclear
bugle call. An ordinary soul, by reading
both documents would not even suspect
where to begin and where to end. Even
bishops who have began preaching the
'New Evangelization' are airing unclear
bugle sounds. Some of them are even
expert theologians invited to advice the
Bishop's Synod.

But yesterday, a glow among the dark
clouds. The Holy Father issued a list of
other advisers to the Synod and they
seem to be his picked men. We can only
hope for fine weather in those days in
Rome.

The dark clouds omitted the two most
important topics in Pope Benedicts
schema, namely, first, 'conversion' and
secondly 'entrance into the kingdom of
God.' Let us leave for a moment the
lengthy and the difficult to understand
Lineamenta and Instrumentum laboris
which Bishops are already preaching



these days, and concentrate on what Pope Benedict had already said.

Last March, the Holy Father addressed some priests and deacons. His message was 'on the importance of Conversion.' He said it was the most important element of the 'New Evangelization.' He calls it the "motor" that makes the soul go through the steps of evangelization that lead to Faith. It is the motor that makes holy souls that will renew the Church. Without it we go nowhere.

The instrumentum laboris for the Bishop's Synod next month, however, mentioned that we don't need conversion. Contradiction? Maybe we are not agreed on the definition of conversion. Let us clarify the word. Since Pope Benedict is highly influenced by both St. Augustine and Blessed John Newman, let us see what the two had to say about "conversion."

A soul must undergo complete conversion before he can deserve eternal life. Christ said: "Repent, believe." Repent is conversion and Christ showed how this is done by living for 30 years a hidden life. That is how long it ordinarily takes.....unless God has very special plans for you. Faith is received immediately after conversion. It might take someone a shorter time but one has to undergo all

the necessary steps. What are the steps and at what point does Conversion begin?

The three general steps that lead to Faith, using the words of St. Augustine are:

A. for the mind to return and discover the self as the image of God and at the same time see the God who gave us that image...and how God stands in reference to us as creatures. This is a critical initial step. This is where a soul begins to be a saint or begins to be a pagan.

B. if a soul does well in the above first step, his mind will realize that he is much inferior to God who is above all and Creator of all,and as a consequence will submit himself to this Almighty God in all things. This is still in the level of the mind but with the cooperation of the free will....which we shall describe later. This is accomplished by a right Conscience, says John Newman. This is humility that makes a soul disposed to receive the beginnings of grace. God gives the soul grace here. Conversion begins here. But it is only a beginning. It has a long way to go.

C. After the soul has re-entered into his mind and discovers both his mind confronted by God..... AND

realizing he must subject himself completely as creature to Creator.....which is conversion....he begins to discover through revelation the Will of God.....not all of them immediately. He learns it slowly beginning with the commandments of God in the Old Testament (10 commandments of the Father thus coming to know the Father as reflected in his own mind). Then he proceeds to study all the commands of Christ in the New Testament (specifically numbering more than 80) and how to obey them.....thus encountering Christ. This is the beginning of Faith in which the souls knows the Father and the Son. Faith will mature depending on how much of God's commands he learns. Faith is when he has learned WHAT are all the commandments of God the Father in the Old Testament and WHAT are all the commandments of God the Son in the New Testament. To perfect that Faith the soul must also learn HOW those commands must be obeyed. Strictly speaking this is Evangelization. This is the contents of the Apostolic Commission given by Christ to the Apostles in the last chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew in the 'commissioning of the disciples'.

We cannot do C, which is to have Faith and develop it into mature Faith unless we have done B, that is receive the grace of Conversion.....which is not

given to all because of a defective letter A.

When by the grace of God we know all WHAT are the commandments of God, both in the Old and New Testament and, also the HOW all those commandments are to be obeyed, this is mature Faith. When we put into practice what our minds have learned through Evangelization, this is the virtue of Charity. With Faith and Charity we would be deserving of Eternal Life.

The main reason why there is a great loss of Faith seen all over the Church from the sands of Africa to the Bishop's palaces, from the priests to the chambers of the Pope, from the nuns to the seminarians....is because of a defective A..... a defective first step.

I magine thyself always to be the servant of all.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion looks out at the world, yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.

St. Teresa of Avila