

One of Jesus's most explicit commands to us was His Great Commission from Matthew 28:18-20.

“And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” (Douay Rheims)

Jesus is telling us that it is our Christian duty to spread the Gospel and to cast our nets into the deep. We typically call this evangelization.

Evangelization is simply understood as sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others so that they make the decision to follow Him, become His disciple, and join His Holy Catholic Church.

This is not a simple task and if you take up this sacred duty, in most cases, you will never know if you are having an impact. Many people get discouraged, but you cannot lose heart because actively engaging in evangelization always has a positive impact; you just may not see it in this life.

The most important thing that you need to know in regard to evangelizing others is that you cannot give what you do not have.

If you do not know Jesus, pray daily, and live virtuously, then you cannot spread the Gospel effectively. This does not mean you have to be perfect, but who will take you seriously if you are telling people to convert and follow Jesus Christ while getting drunk at parties, gossiping, stealing, not practicing chastity, etc.?

Also, if you do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, then who are you leading people to follow? Jesus is not an idea; He is a person we can have a relationship with and who will change our lives for the better.

It's important to realize that bringing others to Christ is not about you. It is about fostering a relationship. In this regard, you are not the one who converts anyone. You are simply dropping seeds along a person's journey through life in hopes that it will blossom and bear fruit.

You can water these seeds with prayer and fasting, but it can only take root if the person is willing to cooperate with God's grace, whether they know what grace is or not.

St. Augustine was a partier, rolled with a gang, had a mistress, and a child out of wedlock. He was brilliant but very worldly.

St. Monica, his mother, was an ardent Catholic and follower of Christ and she tried to convince St. Augustine to join the Church. He was so prideful and intelligent that he brushed off her attempts with ease, utterly unpersuaded of the need to embrace Christ and His Church.

Little did either of them know that the seeds were sown, taking water, but very slowly germinating.

St. Monica prayed and wept and prayed and wept for years. Yet St. Augustine made no movement towards Christ but converted to Manicheism instead.

While teaching in Milan, St. Augustine was prompted to listen to and meet St. Ambrose, the brilliant bishop of Milan. After listening to St. Ambrose, St. Augustine's eyes were opened and he eventually made his way into the Catholic Church.

St. Monica was overjoyed and St. Augustine became one of the greatest intellectual minds the Catholic Church has ever produced.

St. Monica never lost hope and her prayer is what had the biggest impact on St. Augustine

St. Monica dropped seeds; St. Ambrose dropped more seeds, but neither one of them “converted” St. Augustine. They just lived their lives praying, speaking, and living the Gospel and God put the right people in the right place, at the right time.

Everyone wants to be heard and questions related to life and meaning cut to the core of most of us. We all have a strong desire to discuss topics of depth, but it can be hard to find congenial and thoughtful people to have those discussions with.

You can be that person for someone, but it is not easy. It requires keeping your comments to yourself, asking questions, and doing a lot of listening. It requires you being a good friend to someone and the ability to not constantly correct people.

It’s hard when you hear someone say something wrong and not say something. But you need to listen and not respond when using this long game strategy.

It can be very interesting to hear how people think about the world and the universe from a non-Christian worldview, however wrong they are. By not correcting the person and simply listening to them, you are doing two important things: You are building trust. (You are not correcting or condemning them.) You are affirming them and letting them know that what they think is important to you.

After you build trust and a closer friendship with the person you care about, you should invite them to a Catholic event. The obvious one is Holy Mass. Just make sure it’s not the Mass of the Bishop’s Lenten appeal!

Take them to the most reverent and beautiful Mass you can find. If there is one nearby, the High Traditional Latin Mass is particularly intriguing to non-Catholics and lapsed-Catholics alike. Any reverent Catholic Mass will do though. Another thing you can do is invite them to vespers, Holy Hour, a recollection, lecture series, or even a family Catholic feast night. We invited a friend to participate in the Epiphany House Blessing with us and they loved the ritual.

Live the Faith Joyfully

Have you ever met someone who is so filled with joy you walk away wondering, “Where does all that joy come from for that person?” I have. It’s electrifying. Those people are the salt of the earth who make our mouths water for the truth and love that only Jesus Christ can give. It looks different for everyone, but you can have that joy someday too. The easiest way to get it is to pray daily, work on rooting sin out of your life, and be thankful.

The most joy filled people are those who are the most grateful for everything that they have been given by God. When you are grateful, you complain less, and think of God and others more. Those who are joyful feel blessed because they are blessed and they recognize that God has given them an incredible gift. They work on responding to God’s grace to make changes in their lives so that they become freer from sin and worldly attachments, which makes them even more joy filled. Evangelization is about introducing others to the person of Jesus Christ whom you have a relationship with and who changed your life.

Know the Faith

1 Peter 3:15 says, “But sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts, being ready always to satisfy everyone that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you.” (Douay Rheims)

You must become familiar with the Faith and the easiest way is to read the Gospels. St. Jerome said, “Ignorance of scripture is ignorance of Christ.”