

Bridging the Gap Seminar

The New Evangelization & Leadership

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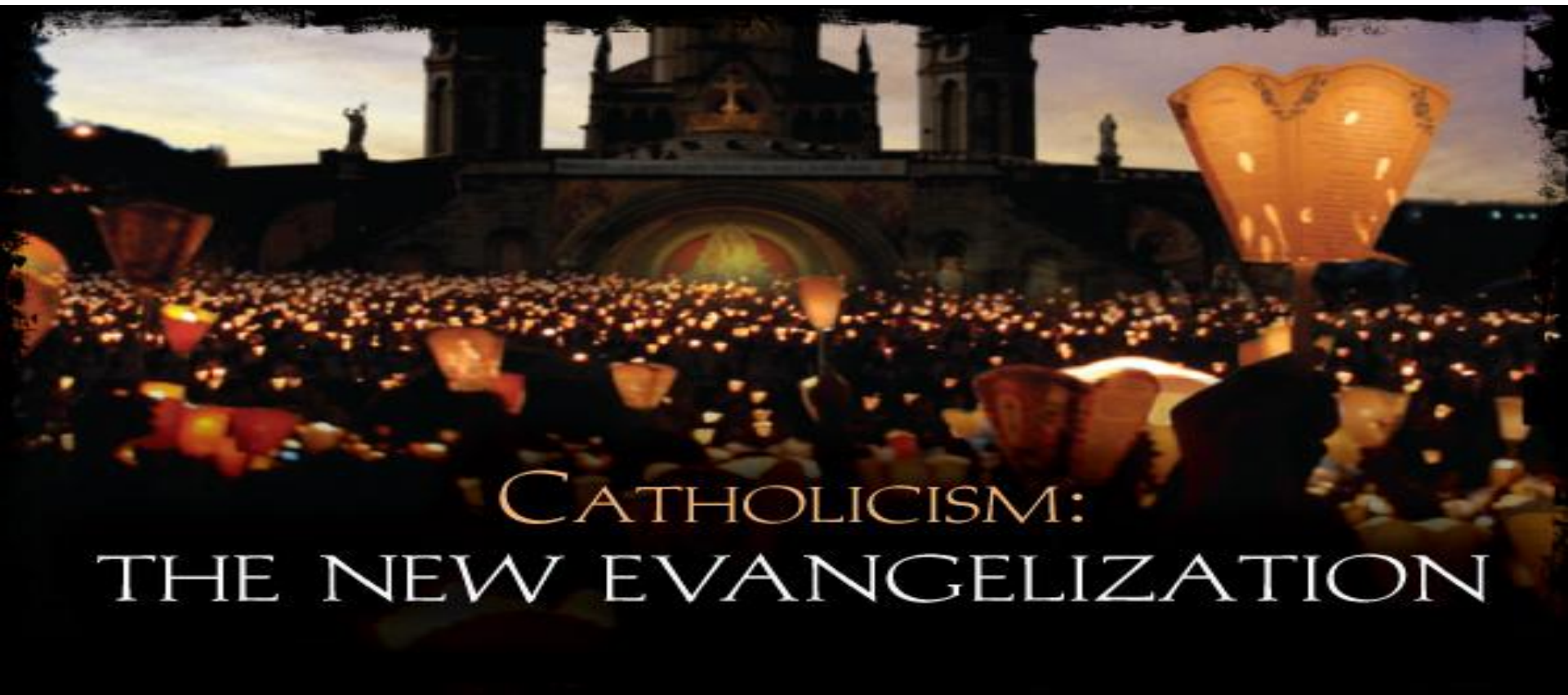
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Introduction

- The New Evangelization: John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Francis
- Not a new Gospel: new ardor, methods, expressions
- Baptized in the pews



CATHOLICISM:
THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

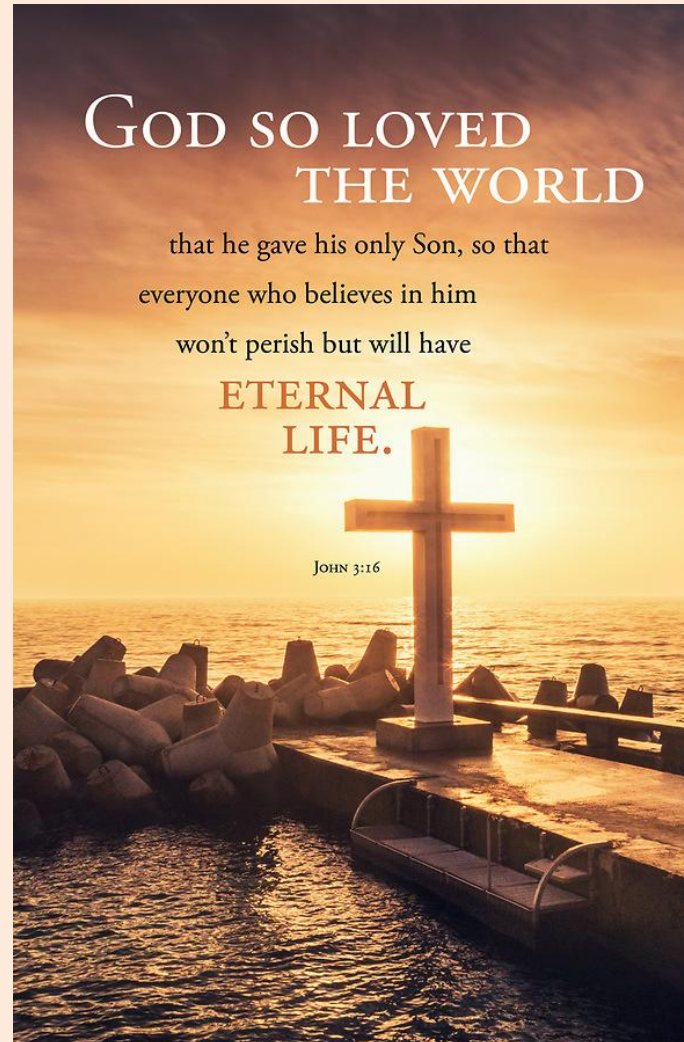
3 Stages of Evangelization

- Ad gentes – to the nations
- Pastoral care – nurturing the flock
- The pews – reawakening Catholics

Opening Example

- First exposure = Sunday Mass
- Confusing yet captivating
- What people see, hear, experience → matters

Why Evangelize?



God's love → Our response → Eternal stakes

Level 1: God's Initiative

- “For God so loved the world...”
- Evangelization begins with God's love, not programs
- Overflow, not manufacture



God's Communication

- Father sends the Son
- Incarnation = definitive act of communication
- “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn 1:14)



Level 2: Our Response

- “...whoever believes in Him”
- Belief = choice + faith + intentional discipleship
- Faith is personal, not private



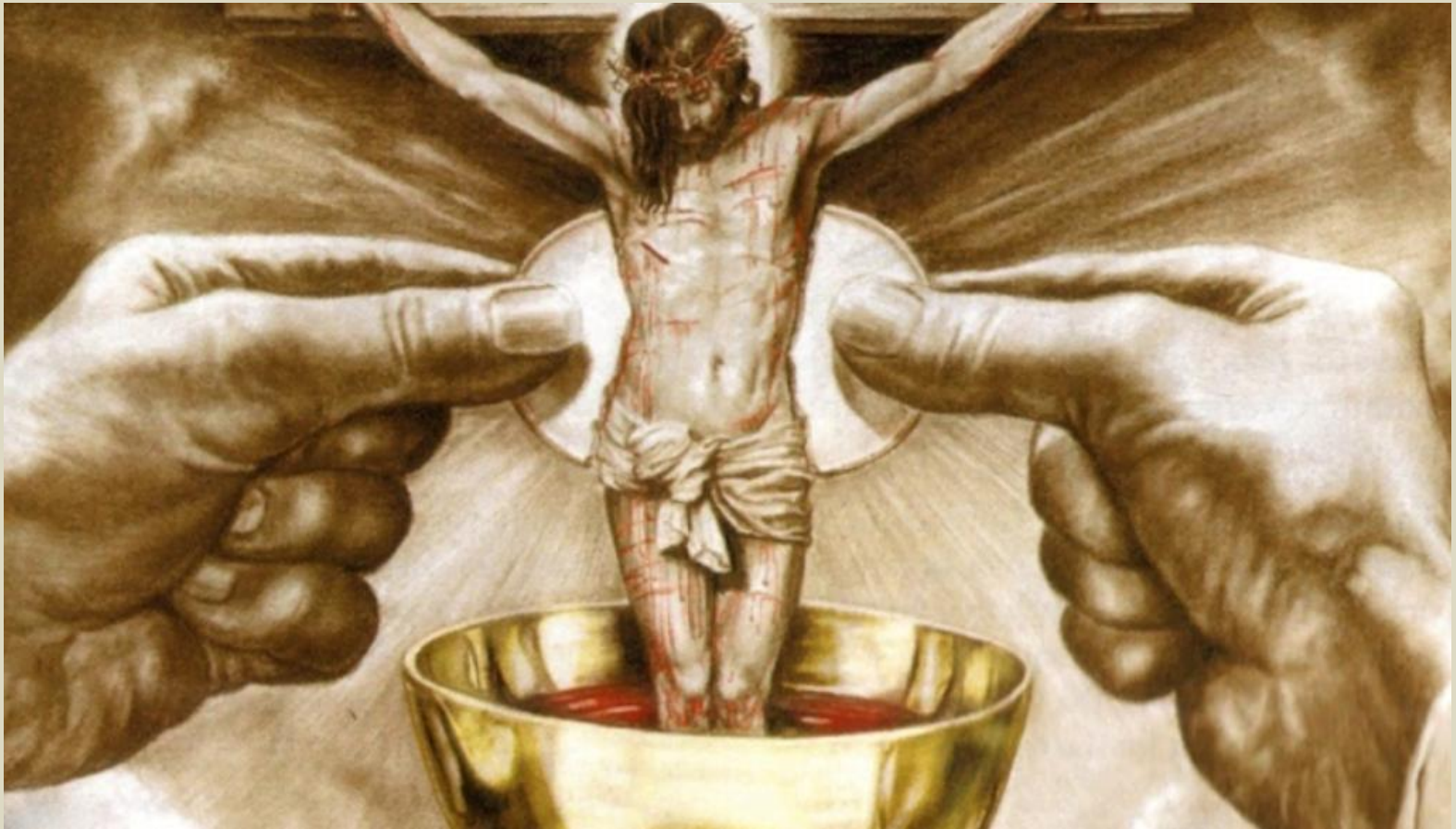
Level 3: The Stakes

- “...may not perish but have eternal life”
- Salvation is gift, but can be rejected
- Urgent mission → eternity is real



Why the Mass Matters

- Eucharist = “source and summit” (Lumen Gentium)
- Seekers’ first encounter
- Hospitality, preaching, music, community matter
- Help interpret the liturgy



Five Thresholds of Conversion

- 1. Initial Trust
- 2. Spiritual Curiosity
- 3. Spiritual Openness
- 4. Spiritual Seeking
- 5. Intentional Discipleship



Threshold #1: Initial Trust

- Bridge of trust with a Christian/parish
- Example: kindness, authenticity
- First step → safe to explore



Threshold #2: Spiritual Curiosity

- Intrigued by Jesus or the Gospel
- First questions emerge
- Analogy: smelling fresh bread outside a bakery



Threshold #3: Spiritual Openness

- Acknowledging personal need
- “Maybe God does have something for me”



Threshold #4: Spiritual Seeking

- Actively searching for God
- Mass, Bible study, RCIA



Threshold #5: Intentional Discipleship

- Conscious decision to follow Christ
- Like Peter leaving his nets
- Chosen identity: I belong to Christ



Why This Matters

- Meet people where they are
- Celebrate progress, not just final step
- Evangelization = walking patiently with others



Why This Matters for a Parish

- Parish that doesn't evangelize slowly dies
- Mission belongs to all, not just Father
- Alive parishes attract others → magnetic

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Homily
08/24/25

FR. RICHARD VIGOA



Parish on Fire

- Every member an evangelizer
- Alive with joy → attracts others
- Not about filling pews, but filling heaven



Personal Witness

- Insert your story here
- What Christ has done in my life
- Everyone has a story to share



Conclusion

- Evangelization = God's love overflowing
- Discipleship = conscious choice
- Parish = field hospital (Pope Francis)
- Our mission: bring others to Christ

