

**Go and Make Disciples:
A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

(Excerpts)

We envision groups of Catholics reading this plan together, discussing its implications and being stimulated by the range of suggested strategies. We see these groups seeking to do things, both within and beyond their own Catholic communities, in ways that make sense for their locale and situation. This document should generate discussion about action: the possibilities and activities present in every Catholic parish and institution.

Evangelizing means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself. Its essence is the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ and the response of a person in faith, both being the work of the Spirit of God.

Our ultimate motive for evangelization is our love for the other. The Lord gave us yet another reason to evangelize: our love for every person, whatever his or her situation, language, physical, mental or social condition. Because we have experienced the love of Christ, we want to share it.

Evangelization, then, has different implications depending on our relationship to Jesus and his Church. For those of us who practice and live our Catholic faith, it is a call to ongoing growth and renewed conversion. For those who have accepted it only in name, it is a call to re-evangelization. For those who have stopped practicing their faith, it is a call to reconciliation. For children, it is a call to be formed into disciples through the family's faith life and religious education. For other Christians, it is an invitation to know the fullness of our message. For those who have no faith, it is a call to conversion to know Christ Jesus and thus experience a change to new life with Christ and his Church.

Inwardly, it calls for our continued receiving of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our ongoing conversion both individually and as Church. *Outwardly*, evangelization addresses those who have not heard the Gospel or, having heard it, have stopped practicing their faith, and those who seek the fullness of faith.

GOAL ONE: To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others.

GOAL TWO: To invite all people in the United States, whatever their social or cultural background, to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic faith.

GOAL THREE: To foster Gospel values in our society, promoting the dignity of the human person, the importance of the family, and the common good of our society, so that our nation may continue to be transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ.

All Catholics are invited to be part of the evangelizing movement of the Church. Our invitation asks every believer to discover ways that he or she can realize this plan in every way appropriate—personally, in the family, in the neighborhood and parish, or as part of a larger organization. Make the goals of this plan real. Discover how the Spirit is leading you to evangelize. Search out how it can re-shape our parishes and our institutions.

*Courtesy of Martha Fernández-Sardina
Director, Office for Evangelization - Archdiocese of San Antonio
210-734-1668 ✠ MFernandez-Sardina@archdiosa.org*