

From the Chosen Leader's Guide (pages 214, 223-224)



CHOSEN

YOUR JOURNEY TOWARD CONFIRMATION

Spreading the kingdom of God – through words and actions – is a mandatory part of the Christian life, not just for priests and religious, but for all believers. In the first days of his pontificate, Pope Francis visited a juvenile prison, washed the feet of single mothers, and went into the crowds to touch the hands of those who reached for him – putting his own safety at risk. Why did he do these things? We find the answer in an interview in 2012, when, as Cardinal Bergoglio (before being named pope), he observed:

We need to avoid the spiritual sickness of a church that is wrapped up in its own world. When a church becomes like this, it grows sick. It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to any ordinary man or woman. But... if I had to choose between a wounded church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn church, I would definitely choose the first one.

To follow Jesus is to show concern and care for all, especially the poor and marginalized who are most in need of love and care. In the book of James, we read, “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” (James 1:27). Through these tiny acts of generosity and compassion, the Church has reached to the farthest corners of the world. And through the Sacrament of Confirmation, each of us is equipped to go out and do this more important work in the name of Christ and his Church.

Main Points

1. **The kingdom of God is both now and yet to come.** The Church is not comprised of spectacular buildings, but of the entire people of God – spanning the world and the centuries (see Catechism of the Catholic Church 769, 2818).
2. **The Church is, by its very nature, “missionary.”** It is the duty of every Christian to take part in the mission of the Church: to build up and spread the kingdom of God (see CCC 768).
3. **We will be called to account for what we do – or do not do – “to the least of our brothers.”** Jesus is very clear about our obligation to those in need in his parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25 (see CCC 1039).



Key Terms

The Kingdom

The Catechism glossary refers to the *kingdom* as “the reign or rule of God.” Jesus announced that “the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15), and he used this image to encourage his disciples who were suffering under the reign of worldly rulers. He was letting them know that, despite their current struggles, God was still in charge and had not abandoned his people.

Jesus assures us that those who submit to him and follow his commands will reap the benefits of his kingdom here and now in the Church. He encourages us to pray, “Thy kingdom come... on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). We can help spread his kingdom by being holy so that God reigns over us, by sharing the good news of the gospel with our family and friends through acts of service, and by working for a more just world.

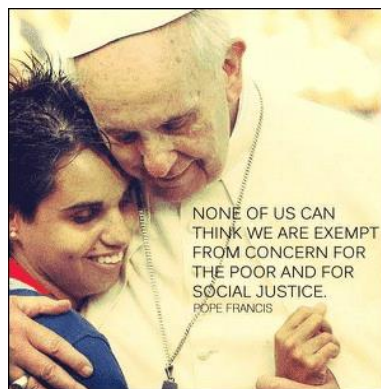
Social Justice

The cardinal virtue of justice assists us in giving God and other people what they deserve, what is fair, or what is “due” to them. *Social justice* is when we work with others to make society a more just place, one that serves the common good. Jesus helped his disciples understand what was due to their neighbor in his parable of the Good Samaritan and his teaching of the “golden rule”: Do to others what you would have them do to you. True justice entails not only feeding the hungry, but caring for their spiritual needs as well. The grace of Confirmation helps us to live the demands of justice.

Evangelization

The word *evangelization* is based on a Greek term meaning “good news” (or “gospel”). Evangelization is the process of preaching the gospel, both through words and example. God loves us, and he sent his Son, Jesus, who died so that we might have life with him now and forever in heaven.

St. John Paul II called for a “New Evangelization” in society, which can be accomplished by the witness of a life lived for Jesus, but which also includes the willingness to tell others about him. Just as the apostles were empowered the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to bring this message of salvation to the world, the same Spirit empowers those who receive the Sacrament of Confirmation to proclaim the Good News to our world today – using all the means of communication we have available.



Coordinator's Reflection

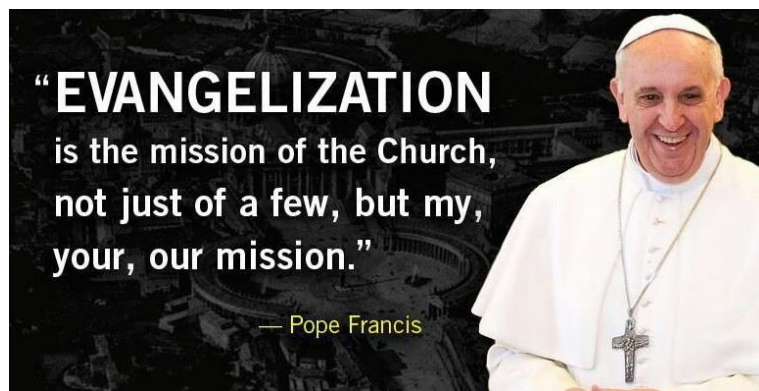
Faith isn't just something that we *have*, but rather something that we *do*. Faith is an act of the will; it is our freely-given response to God's invitation to a loving

relationship. In the Book of James, it's written that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). This is not to say that we earn our way into heaven through works (technically, we can't earn or merit salvation; it's a gift from God), but that we are called to live out our faith through action.

How important is Jesus in your life? When we encounter him in the Mass and the Eucharist, we receive graces that empower us. The more graces we receive, the easier we find it to follow God's will. Ideally, we should be so on fire with love of God that we just can't hold it inside and keep it to ourselves.

I say I will not mention him; I will no longer speak in his name. But then it is as if fire is burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones; I grow weary holding back, I cannot!
-Jeremiah 20:9

Be thinking about the ways you can live out your faith and proclaim the Gospel, not only in words, but in your actions. What will people think about the Catholic faith when they look at you? What kind of example will you set? Will they see Jesus in the things you say and do?



From here, watch the Chosen videos for Lesson 23. Then proceed to the quiz/discussion questions, linked below:

<https://stodiliachurch.wufoo.com/forms/qf3le8o17zo5dv/>