



The Pope Speaks: Wisdom from papal teaching to guide and encourage

SHARING OUR ENCOUNTER, INVITING OTHERS

I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”.

[Evangelii Gaudium](#), 3

Thanks solely to this encounter – or renewed encounter – with God’s love, which blossoms into an enriching friendship, we are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption. We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being. Here we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts at evangelization. *For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others?*

[Evangelii Gaudium](#), 8

A Church which “goes forth” is a Church whose doors are open. Going out to others in order to reach the fringes of humanity does not mean rushing out aimlessly into the world. Often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others, to stop rushing from one thing to another and to remain with someone who has faltered along the way. At times we have to be like the father of the prodigal son, who always keeps his door open so that when the son returns, he can readily pass through it.

[Evangelii Gaudium](#), 46

Today, as the Church seeks to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which falls to each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the Gospel to the people we meet, whether they be our neighbours or complete strangers. This is the informal preaching which takes place in the middle of a conversation, something along the lines of what a missionary does when visiting a home. Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey.

[Evangelii Gaudium](#), 127

The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. The invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and unless he entrusts himself to his Creator.

[Gaudium et Spes](#), 19

We have come to believe in God's love: in these words, the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.

[Deus Caritas Est](#), 1

The main way that we have to “make disciples” is through Baptism and catechesis. This means leading the people we are evangelizing to encounter the living Christ above all in his word and in the sacraments. In this way they can believe in him, they can come to know God and to live in his grace. I would like each of you to ask yourself: Have I ever had the courage to propose Baptism to young people who have not received it? Have I ever invited anyone to embark on a journey of discovery of the Christian faith? Dear friends, do not be afraid to suggest an encounter with Christ to people of your own age. Ask the Holy Spirit for help. The Spirit will show you the way to know and love Christ even more fully, and to be creative in spreading the Gospel.

[Message of Benedict XVI for the Twenty-Eighth World Youth Day](#) (2013), 5

An encounter with the Lord brings about a profound transformation in all who do not close themselves off from him. The first impulse coming from this transformation is to communicate to others the richness discovered in the experience of the encounter. This does not mean simply teaching what we have come to know but also, like the Samaritan woman, enabling others to encounter Jesus personally: “Come and see” (Jn 4:29). The result will be the same as that which took place in the heart of the Samaritans, who said to the woman: “It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world” (Jn 4:42). The Church, which draws her life from the permanent and mysterious presence of her Risen Lord, has as the core of her mission a duty “to lead all people to encounter Christ”.

[Ecclesia in America](#), 68