

TALK 2

Holy Spirit sends the Church out
in mission

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*, 25:

“I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are. ‘Mere administration’ can no longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be ‘permanently in a state of mission’.”

Pope Francis keeps saying: Go out, go forth.

2 dimensions:

1. Go out to the world

The theme of this teaching

2. Go with, walk, on a journey

“communion and mission are profoundly interconnected” (Francis citing St John Paul II in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 23). Communion: see talk 3

- Go out, go forth
- Who? The Church as a community.
- Not just individuals.
- “The Church which ‘goes forth’ is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice.” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 24).
- Francis: Christians are on a journey together.

- Ideally, every Christian who goes out to evangelize, to love, and to serve does so as part of a church community of faith and love.
- Jesus sent out the disciples in pairs “two by two” (Luke 10: 1). Barnabas and Saul (Paul) are sent out from Antioch (Acts 13: 1). Judas and Silas are sent from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 15: 27).
- When when we are alone, we should know we come from the Church, from the community of faith.

- Go out, go forth
- Why? For what purpose?
- To preach the Gospel
- To make disciples (Matt. 28: 19)
- To manifest the mercy of God and the love of Jesus for all (Rom. 11: 32)
- To serve (John 13: 14)

Go out, go forth:

Where? To the extremities, to the periphery.

The poor, the dispossessed, the suffering.

The poor are primarily a theological category not one that is cultural, sociological, political, or philosophical (see *Evangelii Gaudium*, 198).

- What is special about the poor?
- Jesus identified with them in a particular way: Matthew 25: 31 - 46. Hungry, thirsty, homeless, naked, sick, in prison. Francis speaks about *los descartables*, those society has thrown off: the throwaway culture.
- Deepest test of our full conversion: to treat the most despised with full human dignity and to recognize that we can be taught by them.
- See EG, 199; poor .. when loved .. esteemed

Go out, go forth

How?

In love: “To understand this reality [popular piety] we need to approach it with the gaze of the Good Shepherd, who seeks not to judge but to love.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 125)

In humility: as those who know they are forgiven sinners.

In mercy: “Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 24). See also para. 193.

Proclaiming the Gospel

“Evangelizing is ... the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity.”
(Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 14).

“go forth and preach the Gospel to all: to all places, on all occasions, without hesitation, reluctance or fear... No one can be excluded.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 23).

Who proclaims the Gospel?

Evangelii Nuntiandi, Chapter 3, Part I:

Heading: THE ENTIRE PEOPLE OF GOD
PROCLAIMS THE GOSPEL

“All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization” (para. 120).

To show love and mercy to those in need
Francis insists on the identification of Jesus with the poor. He calls them “the flesh of Christ.”

See how Pope Francis avoids all separation, all departmentalization of evangelization, of care for the poor, of ecumenism, of worship in his message to the Pentecostals of Caserta

Pope Francis to Pentecostals

- I love my brother because he too is Christ ... is the flesh of Christ. I love the poor, the widow, the slave, those in prison.... Let's consider the "protocol" by which we will be judged: Matthew 25. I love all these people, because these people who suffer are the flesh of Christ, and it will do us good, who are on this path of unity, to touch the flesh of Christ. To go to the fringes, right where there are so many needs ... so many needy, so many needy.... Even needy of God, who hunger – but not for bread, they have plenty of bread – for God! And go there, to tell this truth: Jesus Christ is the Lord and He saves you. But always go and touch the flesh of Christ! The Gospel cannot be preached purely intellectually: the Gospel is truth but it is also love and it is also beauty! And this is the joy of the Gospel! (28 July 2014)

Going out to the unbelievers and the atheists

Shown in meetings and interviews between Francis and Eugenio Scalfari, editor of La Repubblica in Italy.

Deep sympathy, gently probing questions, total honesty about Church issues.

Francis trusts Scalfari who did not record it.

Leads to some changes in Scalfari.

- What do these interviews show us?
- A different scale of values.
- Top: Relationship, trust, honesty
- Presenting the example of Jesus to others.
- Not top: What other people will think.
- How accurate Scalfari will be.
- People treating every utterance of Francis as infallible.