

New Evangelisation & The Year of Mercy

Priests and People Forum,
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Fr Gerard Kelly

What **a treasure** there is in the guidelines offered to us by the **Second Vatican Council!** ...With the passing of the years, the Council documents have lost nothing of their **brilliance...**

they need to be read correctly, to be widely known and taken to heart as important and normative texts of the Magisterium, within the Church's Tradition...

the **great grace** bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century ...there we find a **sure compass** by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning.

John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 57, (2001).
(quoted by Benedict XVI in *Porta Fidei*, 2011)

Apostolic Constitution: *Fidei Depositum*.

Pope John Paul II presents the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1992

“**Vatican II** has always been, and especially during these years of my Pontificate, the **constant reference point** of my **every** pastoral action, in the **conscious commitment to implement its directives** concretely and faithfully at the level of each Church and the whole Church”.

Aims of the Second Vatican Council

From the introduction to *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (para. 1)

This sacred Council has several aims in view:

- it desires to impart an ever increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful; **RENEWAL**
- to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; **AGGIORNAMENTO**
- to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; **ECUMENISM**
- to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church. **EVANGELISATION**

... on this **tenth anniversary** of the closing of the Second Vatican Council, the objectives of which are definitively summed up in this single one: to make the Church of the twentieth century **ever better fitted for proclaiming the Gospel** to the people of the twentieth century.

Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975 (2).

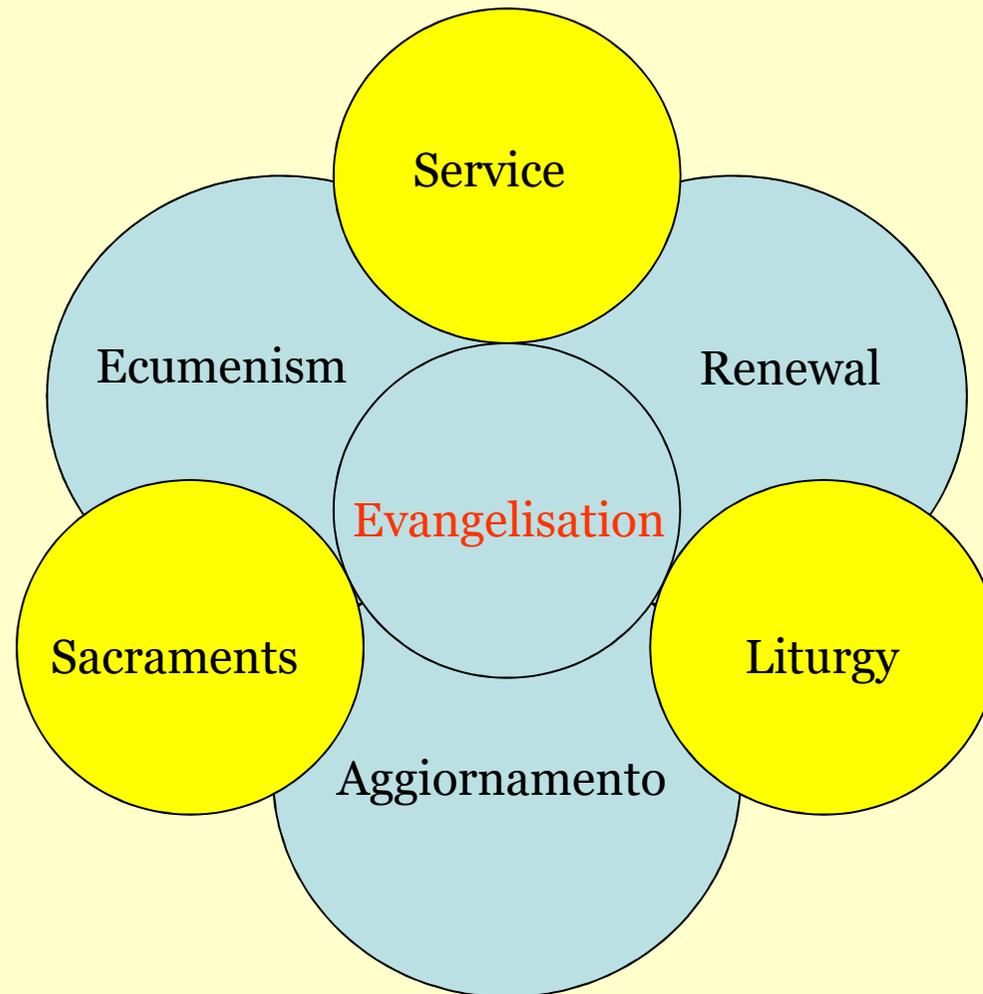
Evangelii Nuntiandi, 1975

"We wish to confirm once more that the task of evangelising all people constitutes **the essential** mission of the Church."

It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent.

Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her **deepest identity**. She exists in order to evangelise (*E.N.14*).

The Evangelising Church



Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her **deepest identity**. She exists in order to evangelise (*E.N.14*).

I sense that the moment has come to commit **all**
of the Church's energies to **a new evangelisation**
and to the mission *ad gentes*.

Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 1990 (3)

“In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* – for me the greatest pastoral document that has been written up to today.”

Pope Francis's Address on 50th Anniversary of Paul VI's Election.

Fifty years after the Second Vatican Council,
while distressed by the troubles of our age and
far from naive optimism, our greater realism
must not mean any less **trust in the Spirit** or less
generosity (EG 84)

Misericordiae Vultus

BULL OF INDICATION
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY
JUBILEE OF MERCY

FRANCIS
BISHOP OF ROME
SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD

TO ALL WHO READ THIS LETTER
GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 11 April, the Vigil of the Second Sunday of Easter, or the Sunday of Divine Mercy, in the year of our Lord 2015, the third of my Pontificate.

***Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis, 2016 (Para 4).**

I have chosen the date of 8th December because of its rich meaning in the recent history of the Church. In fact, I will open the Holy Door on the fiftieth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. The Church feels a great need to keep this event alive. With the Council, the Church entered a new phase of her history.

Today, the human race is involved in a new stage of history
Gaudium et Spes, 4.

***Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis, 2016 (Para 4).**

The Council Fathers strongly perceived, as a true breath of the Holy Spirit, a need **to talk about God to men and women of their time** in a more accessible way. The walls which for too long had made the Church a kind of fortress were torn down and the time had come to proclaim the Gospel in a new way. It was a new phase of the same evangelization that had existed from the beginning. It was a fresh undertaking for **all Christians to bear witness to their faith** with greater enthusiasm and **conviction**. The Church sensed a responsibility to be a living sign of the Father's love in the world.

***Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis, 2016 (Para 4).**

We recall the poignant words of Saint John XXIII when, opening the Council, he indicated the path to follow: “Now the Bride of Christ wishes to use the **medicine of mercy** rather than taking up arms of severity... The Catholic Church, as she holds high the torch of Catholic truth at this Ecumenical Council, wants to show herself **a loving mother to all**; patient, kind, moved by compassion and goodness toward her separated children”

***Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis, 2016 (Para 4).**

Blessed Paul VI spoke in a similar vein at the closing of the Council: “We prefer to point out how charity has been the principal religious feature of this Council... the old **story of the Good Samaritan has been the model of the spirituality of the Council**... a wave of affection and admiration flowed from the Council over the modern world of humanity. Errors were condemned, indeed, because charity demanded this no less than did truth, but for individuals themselves there was only admonition, respect, and love.

***Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis, 2016 (Para 4).**

Instead of depressing diagnoses, encouraging remedies; instead of direful predictions, messages of trust issued from the Council to the present-day world. The modern world's values were not only respected but honoured, its efforts approved, its aspirations purified and blessed... Another point we must stress is this: all this rich teaching is channelled in one direction, **the service of mankind, of every condition, in every weakness and need**".

The work of evangelisation presupposes in the evangeliser an **ever increasing love** for those whom he is evangelising.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, Paul VI, 1975, 79

Redemptoris Missio (JPII 1990)

What moves me even more strongly to proclaim the urgency of missionary evangelisation is the fact that it is the **primary service** that the Church can render to every individual and to all humanity (*RM* 2).

It is important, however, to remember that **the greatest work of charity is evangelization**, which is the “ministry of the word”. There is no action more beneficial – and therefore more charitable – towards one’s neighbour than to break the bread of the word of God, to share with him the Good News of the Gospel, to introduce him to a relationship with God: evangelization is the highest and the most integral promotion of the human person.

(Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for Lent 2013, 3)

The human face is the most easily recognisable characteristic of the human person.

To refer to the face is to refer to the whole person:

A head and shoulders photograph - it is a photograph of me!

Don't show your face around here again!

The Lord said to Moses, “Say this to Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the sons of Israel. Israelites. Say to them:

“ ‘ “The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord (make his **face**) shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn (his **face**) toward you
and give you peace.” ’

“So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.”

Numbers 6: